never high enough to inhibit bone cell function significantly.

The "unrecognised substance that inhibits the aluminium technique" is much less mysterious than it at first appears. The aluminium technique is undertaken at acid pH. Even in the short time that the stain solution is applied to the tissue, the acid conditions initiate decalcification with the result that the local concentrations of calcium and phosphate at bone surfaces (including the cut surface of the trabeculae and cortices) are high. It has been known since 1954³ that high phosphate ion concentrations inhibit the aluminium staining reaction and this is almost certainly the cause of the observed failure of staining.

AJ FREEMONT
J DENTON

Department of Rheumatology,
University of Manchester,
Stopford Building, Oxford Road,
Manchester M13 9PT

References

- 1 Ellis HA, Pang MMC, Mawhinney WHB, Skillen AW. Demonstration of aluminium in

iliac bone: correlation between aluminon and solochrome azurine staining techniques with data of flameless atomic absorption spectrophotometry. *J Clin Pathol* 1988;41:1171-5.

- 2 Denton J, Freemont AJ, Ball J. Detection and distribution of aluminium in bone. *J Clin Pathol* 1985;37:136-42.
- 3 Vogel AJ. *A text book of macro- and semi-microqualitative inorganic analysis*. 4th ed. London: Longmans, 1954.

experimentally induced renal candidosis with a brief review of cases in man affecting the upper renal tract.⁴ Hydronephrosis with formation of fungus ball in the pelvis of the ureter is a feature of this rare disease. The fungus ball described in the bladder by Morton *et al* may well have had its origin in fungal pyelonephritis.

ROSALINDE HURLEY

Department of Microbiology,
Royal Postgraduate Medical School,
Institute of Obstetrics and Gynaecology,
Queen Charlotte's & Chelsea Hospital,
London W6 0XG

Fungus ball of the urinary tract

I read with interest the account by Morton *et al* of urinary bladder fungus ball in a man of 71.¹ As they comment, there is scant mention of this condition, few cases having been reported, but thrush of the urinary bladder was reviewed by Winner and Hurley² and, more recently, candida pyelonephritis has been reviewed by Odds,³ who observed that diabetes is the most common single underlying condition. Hurley and Winner published an illustrated account of the pathogenesis of

References

- 1 Morton KM, Robertson AJ, McIntyre R. Urinary bladder fungus ball. *J Clin Pathol* 1988;41:1243-4.
- 2 Winner HI, Hurley R. *Candida albicans*. London: Churchill, 1964:158.
- 3 Odds FC. *Candida and candidosis*. 2nd Edition. London: Baillière Tindall, 1988:170-4.
- 4 Hurley R, Winner HI. Renal moniliasis in the mouse. *J Pathol Bacteriol* 1963;86:75-82.

Some new titles

The receipt of books is acknowledged, and this listing must be regarded as sufficient return for the courtesy of the sender. Books that appear to be of particular interest will be reviewed as space permits.

An Endoscopic Approach to Bilio-Pancreatic Disease. L Familiari. (Pp 196; £33.) Piccin Nuova Libreria, S.p.A., Padua, Italy; distributed by Gazelle Book Services, Lancaster. 1988. ISBN 88-299-0404-X.

Directory of Ongoing Research in Cancer Epidemiology. Ed MP Coleman, J Wahrendorf. IARC Scientific Publications No. 93. (Pp 662; £26.) Oxford University Press. 1988. ISBN 92 832 1193 6.

From Hippocrates to Virchow: Reflections on Human Disease. JM Byers. (Pp 160; \$32.) Raven Press. 1988. ISBN 0-89189-257-5.

The Biochemical Pathology of Astrocytes. Neurology and Neurobiology. Vol 39. Ed MD Norenberg, L Hertz, A Schousboe. (Pp 662; \$118.) Alan R Liss. 1988. ISBN 0-8451-2741-1.

Quantitative Bioassay. Analytical Chemistry by Open Learning. D Hawcroft, T Hector, F Rowell. (Pp 300; soft cover £11.50.) John Wiley. 1987. ISBN 0-471-91401-0.

European Association for Haematopathology

University of Würzburg

7-11 October 1989

Topics to be covered at this meeting will include:

Lymphoma and lymphoproliferation associated with viral infection; antigenic receptors in malignant lymphomas; pathology of the thymus; aplastic anaemia; recent developments in haematopathology.

For further information contact: EAHP, c/o Institute of Pathology, University of Würzburg, Josef-Schneider-Str. 2, D-8700 Würzburg, West Germany

XIVth European Symposium on Hormones and Cell Regulation

Ste-Odile (near Strasbourg), France, 25-29 September 1989

Call for abstracts for poster presentation

Organiser: Professor JE DUMONT, Institute of Interdisciplinary Research, Université Libre de Bruxelles, Faculty of Medicine, 808 route de Lennik, 1070 Brussels, Belgium