

Book review

Percutaneous Absorption, Drugs — Cosmetics — Mechanisms — Methodology, 3rd Edition, Edited by R.L. Bronaugh and H.I. Maibach, Marcel Dekker Inc., New York, 1999. ISBN 0-82471966-2; 955 pages

The book comprises 56 chapters grouped into three sections: (i) mechanisms of absorption, (ii) methodology and (iii) drug and cosmetic absorption. A very broad and diverse range of subjects, such as mathematical models in absorption, tape-stripping technique, hair dye absorption, is covered. This obviously reflects the editors' "effort to provide a forum for a more complete exposition of the area than has previously been available" (1st edition). The current edition has been revised and expanded to include the many new developments in the field. The book would appeal to a wide audience, from beginners in the field to formulators trying to enhance transdermal delivery to dermato-toxicologists attempting to minimise skin absorption of pesticides and other noxious agents.

The chapters are relatively short, concise and organised into sub-sections. An introduction sets

the scene. The points raised are extensively illustrated by tables, graphs and other figures. Most chapters end with a conclusion or summary. An illuminating account of the theory/basis/concept, advantages and disadvantages, methodology, points of concern, gaps in current knowledge and future prospects is provided.

Overall, this is a well-written, easy to read and very useful book. Despite the absence of an introductory and a concluding chapter which would have helped to set the scene for the whole book and as a round-up, respectively, the editors have succeeded in their effort to provide a broad picture of percutaneous absorption.

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