

BOOK REVIEW

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Review of *Disposition of Toxic Drugs and Chemicals in Man*

REFERENCE: Baselt, Randall C. *Disposition of Toxic Drugs and Chemicals in Man*, 5th ed., Chemical Toxicology Institute, Foster City, CA, 2000, 919 pp., \$119.00.

It is always a pleasure to review a new edition of a book that you have used before. Baselt's first-rate reference is now available in its fifth edition. Because of the increase in new drug entities, it is larger and the addendum to the book signals the rebirth and renewed therapeutic interest in natural supplements. Calling a drug a food supplement gets around many regulations placed on prescription and over-the-counter (OTC) drug products. Because of globalization and harmonization of drug standards, many changes are occurring in the U.S. that will allow many drug substances in their natural form to be sold as food supplements. Baselt has added an entry in the addendum on Melatonin! More will come in the sixth edition.

As with former editions, each drug or chemical entry includes the pharmacokinetic data, when known. This data includes the half-life, volume of distribution, the pKa, and protein binding.

The descriptive information includes: 1) The occurrence and usage which describes the chemical and if it is a therapeutic agent, gives the name, trade name, and generic name; 2) The blood concentrations or levels. This describes the therapeutic levels follow-

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ing various dosages; 3) The metabolism and excretion. This describes the normal body breakdown products, including the active metabolites; 4) Toxicity. This describes the toxic effects and reported cases of human intoxication with levels of drug found and metabolites as well, if they are active. Fatal cases are reported where the chemical has killed and blood and tissue concentrations are given; and 5) The final information deals with the methods of analysis for the analyte. References are given at the end of each drug or chemical entry included in the book.

The fifth edition has close to 500 entries, which is an increase over the fourth edition. The size of the book is steadily increasing, but is of a size that is easy to handle.

The structural formula is given for each entry with some exceptions. No structure is given for gasoline or insulin! The use of Baselt's book saves much time in that a lot of information is given that you would otherwise have to look up in many other references. The only item missing is the molecular weight.

Every pathologist, toxicologist, ER physician, and trauma unit physician should own this book. The book also can be utilized by pharmacists, nurses, lawyers, and judges.

Baselt started this effort over 20 years ago and it represents a tremendous work effort, even in the computer age, and I congratulate him on his efforts and his help.

This reference gives a lot of useful information for a very low price.