REVIEWS

Textbook of Adverse Drug Reactions. Edited by D. M. DAVIES. Oxford University Press, 200 Madison Ave., New York, NY 10016. 1977. 503 pp. 19.5 × 25 cm. Price $33.95.

This comprehensive book fills the need for an authoritative reference on all major and minor adverse drug reactions. It is the collective work of 32 contributors authoring the 29 chapters and four appendixes.

The specific subject matter covered starts with the history, epidemiology, and pathogenesis of adverse drug reactions and then travels through all the body organs and systems that can possibly be affected by drugs in an unfavorable manner. Also included are the toxicity of opaque media used in X-ray diagnosis, as well as the medicolegal aspects and implications of adverse drug reactions and detection techniques.

The casual reader may be horrified by the great amount of information already available on undesirable effects of the approximately 650 drugs that are prescribed between one and 50,000 times per year and wonder, therefore, why these drugs are still being administered. However, one should be reminded that risk *versus* benefit must be considered when any drug is prescribed. Also, for any drug to be valuable and work, it will always be toxic at some dosage level. A completely safe drug does not exist. A reasonable amount of adverse drug reactions must, therefore, be tolerated in our unending quest for the amelioration of disease manifestations.

Throughout this book, the mechanisms of drug-induced reactions are noted where known and in all cases are explained clearly and concisely. The editor has done a magnificent job of making all the contributors not stray too far from the task at hand. The index is exhaustive, showing the extent of the available information. In addition, the reference material appended to each chapter is far more extensive then that usually seen in a book of this type.

This book is recommended for anyone requiring information on adverse drug reactions of most contemporary drugs. Among those in the health professions that would most likely benefit from it are physicians specializing in internal medicine, pharmacists performing patient counseling, and anyone on the health care team involved in the monitoring of adverse drug reactions including clinical pharmacologists.

Reviewed by Ronald F. Gautieri
Department of Pharmacology
School of Pharmacy
Temple University
Philadelphia, PA 19140

Industrial Bioavailability and Pharmacokinetics: Guidelines, Regulations, and Controls. Edited by ALFRED MARTIN and JAMES T. DOLUISIO. College of Pharmacy, Drug Dynamics Institute, University of Texas, Austin, TX 78712. 1977. 539 pp. 21 × 28 cm.

This book is a somewhat disorganized compilation of some of the presentations from the International Industrial Pharmacy Conference sponsored by the College of Pharmacy, University of Texas, over a 3-year period (1974–1976). The editors have done the best possible job of arranging the material; the fault lies primarily with the inclusion of too many subjects that have little or nothing to do with the title and expressed purpose of the book, "the publication of federal guidelines, regulations, and controls related to industrial problems in drug product bioavailability and pharmacokinetics." Considerable space is devoted to such diverse subjects as the future of compendia, standards for containers and closures, and chemical standards and quality control. The editors have tried valiantly to relate all this information, but it is a hopeless cause, considering the book's title and apparent purpose.

One can find little fault with the qualifications of the authors and editors; they represent some of the very best in the fields of academia, industry, compendia, and government. Furthermore, most presentations, taken individually, are very solid; there is a great deal of relevant information in this book. But its value is considerably lessened by three interrelated culprits: the aforementioned disorganization/diversity, acute redundancy, and mild pedestrianism.

One of the clearer examples of redundancy is the inclusion of three different and overlapping versions of the bioavailability guidelines: the 1974 and 1976 "unofficial" views and the official rules and regulations published in the January 7, 1977, "Federal Register." The repetitiousness of this approach—with its accompanying boredom—is not at all offset by the experience of "(watching) the edifice (i.e., the regulations) as it is being built." A far more efficient and economical way to obtain this information would be order the January 7, 1977 "Federal Register." Additional redundancy is heaped upon the reader when the identical subject (Contributions of Pharmacokinetics During Drug Development) is presented from two different points of view, industry and FDA. Obviously, there is some worthwhile additional information in each presentation, but this approach invites repetition and, while barely tolerable in oral presentations, is best avoided altogether in print.

The third offender, mild pedestrianism, is not the fault of the authors as individuals, nor can it really be attributed to the editors. The basic problem, that too much of the information in the book has appeared elsewhere, stems from our unfortunate tendency to hold too many symposia/conferences on the same subject at (essentially) the same time in different places with essentially the same people presenting and attending.

But in spite of these drawbacks and others (*e.g.*, one questions the added expense of a hard cover and double spacing), the basic value of the philosophies and technical information presented shines through—if one has the patience and mental discipline to put up with the redundancy. It is regrettable that the proceedings of such a worthwhile conference couldn't be published in a more meaningful and less expensive way.

Reviewed by James E. Tingstad
Riker Laboratories, Inc.
Saint Paul, MN 55101

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Glucagon: Its Role in Physiology and Clinical Medicine. Edited by PIERO P. FOÀ, JASBIR S. BAJAJ, and NAOMI L. FOÀ. Springer-Verlag, 175 Fifth Ave., New York, NY 10010. 1977. 793 pp. 18 × 26 cm.

Inflammation: Mechanisms and Their Impact on Therapy. Proceedings of an Advanced Teaching Course Held in Rotterdam, November 1976. Edited by I. L. BONTA, J. THOMPSON, and K. BRUNE. Birkhäuser Verlag, P. O. Box 34, CH-4010 Basel, Switzerland. 1977. 197 pp. 16 × 24 cm. Price Sfr. 90.—.

Origins of Human Cancer. Book A, Incidence of Cancer in Humans, 602 pp; *Book B, Mechanisms of Carcinogenesis,* 1303 pp; *Book C, Human Risk Assessment,* 1889 pp. Edited by H. H. HIATT, J. D. WATSON, and J. A. WINSTEN. Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory, P. O. Box 100, Cold Spring Harbor, NY 11724. 1977. 18 × 26 cm. Price $45.00 (set of three).

Reviews of Physiology, Biochemistry and Pharmacology 79. Edited by R. H. ADRIAN *et al.* Springer-Verlag, 175 Fifth Ave., New York, NY 10010. 1977. 180 pp. 16 × 24 cm. Price $45.10.

This volume contains "The Binding of Saxitoxin and Tetrodotoxin to Excitable Tissue," by J. M. RITCHIE and R. B. ROGART; "The Physiology, Pharmacology, and Biochemistry of the Eccrine Sweat Gland," by K. SATO; and "H+ Transport by a Non-Electrogenic Gastric ATPase as a Model for Acid Secretion," by G. SACHS.

Hypertension. Mechanisms, Diagnosis & Management. Edited by JAMES O. DAVIS, JOHN H. LARAGH, and AMY SELWYN. HP Publishing, 575 Lexington Ave., New York, NY 10022. 1977. 274 pp. 21 × 24 cm.

Applications of Ion-Selective Membrane Electrodes in Organic Analysis. By GEORGE E. BAIULESCU and VASILE V. COSOFRET. Halsted,