

**N-Nitroso Compounds: Occurrence and Biological Effects.** Edited by H. BARTSCH, I. K. O'NEILL, M. CASTEGNARO, and M. OKADA. International Agency on Cancer, Health and Biomedical Information Programme, World Health Organization, 1211 Geneva 27, Switzerland, 1982. 753 pp. 17 × 24 cm. Price \$55.00 (Sw. Fr. 110).

This volume is comprised of the Proceedings of the 7th International Symposium on *N*-Nitroso Compounds held in Tokyo, September 1981. It includes 73 papers and draws from a wide range of scientific disciplines. Numerous experts present information on the formation, occurrence, and biological effects of *N*-nitroso compounds. Formation of *N*-nitroso compounds within the body is reported by several workers and is discussed in relation to the ingestion of various materials. Data are given on exposure to *N*-nitroso compounds in the general environment and from tobacco usage. New and important developments of methods and approaches are presented that could promote the understanding of basic mechanisms of carcinogenesis and which could also be readily applied to the detection and analysis of *N*-nitroso compounds or their precursors. Also presented are suggestions for possible future research on nitroso compounds. A possible drawback of the book is the limited coverage of nitrosoureas, an important group of compounds in cancer research and treatment.

The papers are short, easy to read, and most present considerable background information. Concise figures and tables are used when appropriate. There is an author index and a thorough subject index. A list of references is given at the end of each chapter to assist readers seeking additional information. This book, written entirely in English, contains an enormous amount of useful information and is recommended as a general reference book to anyone directly involved in work on *N*-nitroso compounds.

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**Side Effects of Drugs Annual 7.** Edited by M. N. G. DUKES. Elsevier Biomedical Press B.V., P.O. Box 1527, 1000 BM Amsterdam, The Netherlands. 1983. 539 pp. 15 × 25 cm. Price \$70.25 (Dfl. 165.00).

Adverse reactions to therapeutic agents can result from many and diverse factors. Two reactions of major significance are the abnormal patient reaction to a drug and the development of unexpected toxicity when two or more drugs are administered together. *Side Effects of Drugs Annual*, which has been published annually in January since its inception in 1977, is designed to provide a critical evaluation of the literature and an up-to-date account of recent information relating to these drug reactions and interactions. In this regard, the current *Annual* covers reports published between July 1981 and June 1982. In general, only publications presenting new information are reviewed. The reports which are documented are based on material from the Excerpta Medica Database System, which screens approximately 4000 journals in nearly 20 languages.

Although each *Annual* edition can be used independently, they are best employed as supplements to the most recent edition of the parent reference, *Meyler's Side Effects of Drugs*, an encyclopedic resource that reviews all existing knowledge on adverse reactions. The greatest value of a regularly published supplement is that it permits a continuing discussion of problems associated with the use of drugs; the question of a drug-induced disease raised one year can be followed up in subsequent years as the evidence to confirm or deny its occurrence becomes available. In addition, the *Annual* is published at a time when scattered reports of an iatrogenic disease have appeared in the medical and pharmaceutical literature, but have not been the subject of critical editorials and other review articles.

Each year an introductory chapter entitled "Side Effects of Drugs Essay" has been published as a forum for the discussion of topics that

are of current interest. This year, the essay written by the Chief of the Product Related Disease Division of Canadian Department of Health and Welfare explores drug development and formulation in light of documented adverse reactions, suspected reactions, and mere accusations of the possibility of adverse drug reactions. As noted in the introduction to the essay, its writer has designed it to be controversial with the intention of exposing pitfalls and false conceptions. In addition, beginning in 1980 and continuing with the current edition, a valuable feature entitled "Special Reviews" printed in italic type and identified by the traditional prescription symbol has appeared. These reviews, found in many of the 51 chapters, are critical discussions of controversial areas or the publication of new findings that require revision of existing concepts. Many report the latest developments in issues of continuing concern such as interactions of lithium with other drugs, side effects of  $\beta$ -blockers given prophylactically after myocardial infarction, ketoconazole and the liver, and prediction of anthracycline cardiomyopathy. In addition to discussing the data, each review offers the reader information that is useful clinically in recognizing, evaluating, and managing the specific reaction.

The current edition continues the discussion of drugs used in nonorthodox medicine begun with the first *Side Effects of Drugs Annual*. This year, the authors review the reports of toxicity from herbal remedies as well as updating previous information on laetrile. The chapter on miscellaneous drugs includes a special review and update on surgical materials and other appliances.

The drugs discussed in *Side Effects of Drugs Annual* are classified according to their pharmacological properties or therapeutic use. They are accessed by consulting an index of drugs, an index of side effects, or an index of interactions. In addition, an index of synonyms enables the reader to identify specific drugs by their foreign brand name, investigational number, chemical name, or abbreviation. To facilitate rapid searching, the three major indices in the current *Annual* provide a complete listing of all references discussed in the previous three volumes of this series. The references in each chapter have been uniquely coded to identify those reports in which (i) the information presented is reviewed in some detail; (ii) the original citation refers only briefly to the information presented; (iii) the original citation presents detailed clinical evidence; and (iv) the original citation provides a brief clinical description. The code allows the reader to select the original source most useful in documenting a specific drug-induced side effect.

This is a superb reference which provides an invaluable source of information on adverse drug reactions reported in the literature during a 1-year period. Even though the *Annual* series are not intended to be used as comprehensive references sources, many of the chapters, and in particular the special reviews, make fascinating reading. The major drawback of this reference is its cost, but it should be a part of the collection of medical libraries, drug information centers, and hospital pharmacies, where it would be available to those who dispense as well as those who prescribe drugs.

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**Pathology of Tumours in Laboratory Animals, Volume III: Tumours of the Hamster.** V. S. TURUSOV, Editor-in-Chief. International Agency for Cancer Research Scientific Publication No. 34. World Health Organization, 1211 Geneva 27, Switzerland. 1983. 461 pp. 18 × 24 cm. Price \$40.00 (Sw. Fr. 80).

This volume, sponsored by the World Health Organization, is the third in a series concerning tumors of laboratory rodents, i.e., rat, mouse, and now hamster. The text contains a number of contributions from F. N. Ghadially, A. Cardesa, A. H. Handler, A. D. Kelman, A. Emminger, U.