

The Need for Information on Product Formulations

I thoroughly enjoyed your editorial "Putting An End to Secret Formulations."¹ Over the years I've had numerous debates with manufacturers over the issue of "trade secrets" (Boloney!) versus the health professionals' need for information on product formulations.

As you pointed out, any competitors' laboratory worth their salt will rapidly crack such "secret formulations." Therefore, the only ones kept in the dark are the physician prescribers and pharmacist dispensers of these pharmaceuticals.

Although you state that "manufacturers are required by law and regulation to make known the identity and quantity of the medicinally active ingredients in their products," even this is not always the case. For example, in many artificial tear solutions and contact lens solutions, the functionally active components may only be identified as "a water-soluble polymeric system" or "an anionic surface-active agent."

If health care professionals are to make informed product selection decisions, the industry must provide this needed information. Although

regulatory remedies may be necessary, industry leaders with vision might see that voluntary cooperation would result in benefits to all concerned.

Must we have mandatory CE before pharmacists accept their obligation to maintain their competence? Must we have mandatory relabeling requirements before the industry responds to the information needs of the public? Must we always have an expensive, legislative, regulated, bureaucratized solution to every problem?

The PMA has taken a significant first step in stating "the medical justification for disclosure . . . warrants release of that information . . ." Let's hope that individual manufacturers respond to your call for "putting an end to secret formulations."

James R. Boyd
Editor-in-Chief
"Facts and Comparisons"
St. Louis, MO 63146

¹ Edward G. Feldmann, *J. Pharm. Sci.*, 73, 577 (1984).

BOOKS

Instrumental Data for Drug Analysis. Vol. 2. (Elsevier Series in Forensic and Police Science.) By TERRY MILLS III, WILLIAM N. PRICE, and J. CONRAD ROBERTSON. Elsevier Science Publishing Co., Inc. 52 Vanderbilt Ave., New York, NY 10017. 1983. pp. 662-1358. 22 × 28.5 cm. Price \$95.00.

This second volume contains data on an additional 300 drug substances bringing the total compounds covered in both volumes to 600.

Each drug substance is allotted two pages on which ultraviolet, electron impact mass, proton nuclear magnetic resonance, and Fourier transform infrared spectra are presented. All spectra are of exceptional quality. Also given are molecular formulas and weights, synonyms, trade names, therapeutic categories and, in shorthand style, HPLC and GC data where applicable. There are also four appendices containing standard KBr infrared spectra and, in tabular form, Kovats retention indices for gas chromatography, the ultraviolet absorption maxima in acid, basic and ethanol solution, and mass spectral indices for base peaks and prominent ions.

The atlas has been compiled by forensic scientists of the Georgia State Crime Laboratory and should be useful for the identification of drugs. Thus, the compilation serves as a supplement to the *Merck Index* which does not present spectra. The two volumes compete with two *CRC Handbooks of Mass Spectra and Spectrophotometric Data of Drugs* which together sell for about the same price. I prefer the volumes under review for better organization, clearer spectra and coverage of more drugs. One can quibble that the shorthand data on HPLC and GC are of questionable value. It also would have been useful to identify for each drug the source of the sample, particularly whether the drug was a USP reference standard.

All efforts to provide comprehensive information on drugs are welcome. Therefore, the authors should be congratulated and encouraged to continue the series.

Reviewed by Klaus G. Florey
The Squibb Institute for Medical Research
P.O. Box 191
New Brunswick, NJ 08903

Applied Therapeutics: The Clinical Use of Drugs, 3rd Ed. Edited by BRIAN S. KATCHER, LLOYD YEE YOUNG, and MARY ANNE KODAKIMBLE. Applied Therapeutics, Inc., P.O. Box 1903, Spokane, WA 99210-1903. 1983. 1,619 pp. 19.5 × 24 cm. Price \$54.00.

The editors and authors of *Applied Therapeutics: The Clinical Use of Drugs*, 3rd edition, have refined and expanded the book previously titled, *Applied Therapeutics for Clinical Pharmacists*. It is appropriate that the title has been changed because the book can be of great value to any health professional involved in treating and monitoring patients receiving drug therapy.

Applied Therapeutics: The Clinical Use of Drugs is relatively comprehensive. The book consists of 61 chapters, 1619 pages with numerous tables and figures. The more commonly occurring chronic and acute diseases are presented with heavy emphasis being placed on drug therapy management. This book is not a substitute for a standard textbook of medicine in terms of understanding pathophysiology and diagnosis of various disease entities. It is an essential companion textbook to a medical textbook, however, and is evolving as the premier book in the field of drug therapy management of disease processes.

The book is well written and referenced. The question and answer format and utilization of case studies is particularly effective in demonstrating appropriate application of pharmacotherapeutic information in specific clinical situations. The book fosters the development of a rational approach to drug therapy management.

There is nothing esoteric about this book. It is a practical guide to optimal drug therapy. It is an excellent manual for the clinician. All health care professionals involved in primary medical care, particularly pharmacists, physicians, and nurse practitioners, would be well served by this book.

Reviewed by Tim R. Covington
Professor and Chairman
School of Pharmacy
West Virginia University
Medical Center
Morgantown, WVA 26506-6303