

**Book review**

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*Metal Toxicity in Mammals, Vol. 1, Physiologic and Chemical Basis for Metal Toxicity, Vol. 2, Chemical Toxicity of Metals and Metalloids;* by T.D. Luckey and B. Venugopal. Plenum Press, New York, Vol. 1, 1977, x + 238 pages; Vol. 2, 1978, x + 409 pages, \$ 55.00.

It is one of the signs of our time that chemists are becoming more concerned with the toxicity of the substances with which they work and also more aware that toxicity may be longterm and slow to show itself as well as swift and dramatic. Details of metal toxicity are, however, scattered throughout the biological and medical as well as the chemical literature so the average chemist has considerable difficulty in making himself aware of what has been done even about the elements whose chemistry he knows well. These two volumes arose from a systematic search of the metal-toxicity literature up to 1975 and represent an important source of information. Volume 1 covers general topics such as modes of intake and excretion, modes of poisoning, carcinogenicity and teratogenicity. There are also explanations of technical terms which will be invaluable, both to chemists unfamiliar with biology and to biologists unfamiliar with chemistry, for those seeking further details from the primary literature. Volume 2 contains a systematic element-by-element account of toxicity. Organometallic compounds have been specifically excluded from the literature surveys and the authors suggest that they should form the subject of a third volume. Nevertheless, chemists working on organometallic compounds use inorganic substances as starting materials or convert their compounds into inorganic form for disposal or recovery, and need to be aware of hazards at all stages in their work. These books will direct their attention to the appropriate literature. There are about 1700 references.

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