Notes and news

Musculoskeletal disorders

The International Skeletal Society is holding its 17th annual refresher course on musculoskeletal disorders from 12 to 15 September 1990, at the Salzburg Convention Center, Salzburg, Austria. The course will be accredited for 27 hours in category 1.

For more information please contact: Dawne Ryals, Ryals & Associates, PO Box 1925, Roswell, HA 30077–1925, USA. Tel (404) 641 9773. Fax (404) 552 9859.

Congress on inflammation

The first international congress on inflammation will be held from the 17 to 22 June 1990, in Barcelona, Spain, and it is proposed that this shall establish a biennial form of basic clinical research.

For further information please contact the Organizing Secretariat, ALM sr1, Via Lattuada, 26, 20135 Milan, Italy.

Book reviews


There can be no doubt that the appearance of this book describing the interrelationship of cardiological and rheumatological disease is timely.

For the practising cardiologist the lack of new cases of rheumatic fever has led to a situation in which most new referrals with heart valve disease do not have this as a cause any longer. The universal availability of echocardiography, providing a non-invasive positive image of abnormal valves, has heightened awareness of this change, and cardiologists are more aware of rheumatoid arthritis, ankylosing spondylitis, and scleroderma as causes of cardiac disorders.

The vulnerability of both the pericardium and myocardium to disease processes usually found in modern rheumatological practice has further strengthened the clinical links between the disciplines of cardiology and rheumatology. This particular marriage of interests is likely to endure for many years and texts such as this from Drs Cosh and Lever will prove welcome to specialists in both fields. Certainly, cardiologists will wish to be aware of the multisystem disorders affecting their patients. The rheumatological presentations of infective endocarditis or atrial myxomata are also important and well covered here. This is a scholarly book with extensive references, which have covered a wide range of interests.

It is always difficult to strike the right balance when one is seeking a worldwide readership. I really would have preferred rheumatic valve disease to have been relegated towards the end of the book rather than occupying the first two chapters as the contents of these chapters must be very well known to readers. The discussion of cardiac manifestations of modern rheumatological practice is where the strength of the text lies.

The sections on rheumatoid arthritis and ankylosing spondylitis are excellent and the illustrations in the text, both clinical and pathological, are of the highest quality. They are clearly reproduced and invariably relevant to the surrounding text.

The interrelationship between rheumatology and cardiology will undoubtedly continue to be important in the future. The authors are to be congratulated on their book, which will be of real value to most cardiological departments and candidates for Membership.

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P MILLS


Few topics in the fuzzy world of rheumatology are as fuzzy as soft tissue disorders. The outback of rheumatic disease is ill defined, poorly explored and populated like any outback by a bunch of dogmatic roughnecks without much regard for the niceties of scientific scepticism. But it is a land also full of people suffering, who provide the major day to day concern for an industry of health care workers, including rheumatologists.

It is an important clinical challenge to explore the problem with the clinical observation and logic needed to develop a deeper understanding and, hopefully, better control.

The report of the ARC conference on Soft Tissue Rheumatism is a step towards that. It is a collection of different author chapters covering regional problems, some disease concepts like sports injury and fibromyalgia, and a chapter on epidemiology. Each chapter is referenced. It reads, however, more as the summary of talks prepared before they were presented and not as the synopsis of discussion and thought on the topic as a result of the meeting. The report is short, but the abbreviated style makes for dry rather difficult reading.

The biggest problem is the subject. Reports so far are confusing and dogmatic and attempting to go forward from this base is starting in a mire. Several chapters fall into the trap of reiterating the dogmas uncritically. In contrast, Alan Silman

Carol-Nachman award for rheumatology

The Carol-Nachman award for rheumatology 1991, Wiesbaden, FRG, will be awarded annually for excellent research in the field of rheumatology. It is endowed with DM 75 000.

Submission of work may be made up to 30 November 1990. Further information from Professor Dr med D Maas, Rheumaklinik 1, Langgasse 38–40, D-6200 Wiesbaden, FRG.

Kennedy Institute of Rheumatology: symposium

To mark the 25th anniversary of its foundation the Kennedy Institute of Rheumatology is organising a two day symposium at the Royal Society, London, SW1, on the 19 and 20 July 1990. Many eminent speakers have been invited from the United Kingdom and overseas to address an audience of investigators in rheumatology on new developments in their field of research. There will be a fee of £75 with lunch at extra cost.

For further details please contact Mr C Boden, General Secretary, The Kennedy Institute of Rheumatology, 6 Bute Gardens, Hammersmith, London W6 7DW.