The newer cytotoxic drugs used in connective tissue disorders (J H Klippel) and the role of radiotherapy (A J Calin) are dealt with in two useful chapters. In the former, the available information on the use of cyclophosphamide, azathioprine, methotrexate, and cyclosporin is presented together with information on the potential risks, including that of malignancy.

The sacroiliac joint, always a subject of much debate, receives detailed attention by N Bellamy who certainly provides a very comprehensive account of our current knowledge about this joint but rather avoids answering the question of how much this joint contributes to low back pain syndromes. The clinical reviews are well rounded off with useful reviews of dermatology and rheumatology (L G Millard), sports medicine (F Murray Leslie), and rehabilitation of the rheumatic patient (J Winfield).

It would be remiss of me not to mention the editors' paper on medical communication. Even in this short review I have no doubt that I have committed all the cardinal sins of jargon, illiteracy, illegibility, and lack of understanding but if I can communicate to you that this is a book you should get hold of and read, all is not lost.

Consultant in Rheumatology
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J R JENNER

Lecture Notes on Rheumatology. By J Edmonds and G Hughes. Pp. 296. £8.50. Blackwell Scientific: Oxford. 1985.

This short compact book is an important addition to

the Lecture Notes Series and long overdue. It provides details of the pathogenesis, clinical and laboratory features, and treatment of all the major rheumatic disorders. It is designed mainly for undergraduates, but the style and content make it an essential text for junior doctors, MRCP candidates, and anyone interested in an up to date basic account of rheumatological disorders.

The information is presented in a simple annotated and well set out form which allows a convenient review of all but the rarities, and permits reference and revision. The emphasis is on clinical diagnosis. In general the radiological and laboratory investigations are included in brief but clinically relevant form.

Subjects of academic interest sometimes benefit at the expense of the more mundane but clinically important issues. Rheumatic fever merits eight pages, for example, whereas osteoporosis is covered in only half a page!

A very detailed section on antinuclear antibodies reflects the authors' passionate interest in this ever changing subject. The importance of HLA and rheumatic diseases is well covered in a better balanced section.

The diagnostic value given to a differential white cell count in synovial fluid pays respect to ancient texts and is more useful in certain examination halls rather than in a busy DGH clinic (in the UK anyway!).

This book fills a gap extremely well and also fits very conveniently into a white coat pocket.

Consultant Rheumatologist,
City Hospital,
St Albans

ADAM YOUNG

Notes

Postgraduate course on rheumatic disorders in childhood: diagnosis and management

This five day comprehensive course will take place on 15-20 March 1987, at the Winter Sport Center, Vålådalen, Sweden. For further information and preliminary registration contact: Julio E Goobar, MD, Postgraduate Teaching Section, Hospital for Rheumatic Diseases, S-831 02 Östersund, Sweden.

Anticardiolipin test antisera

On 4 April 1986 the Lupus Research Laboratory sponsored an international workshop to standardise the anticardiolipin (aCL) test. Five antisera have been prepared for distribution to laboratories wishing to standardise this test, and protocol has been established to evaluate the validity

and reproducibility of the assay methods used by participating laboratories. These reference sera and instructions for participation in the aCL standardisation process can be obtained by writing to Mrs Jill Harris, Lupus Research Laboratory, Rayne Institute, St Thomas's Hospital, London SE1 7EH. There will be a charge of £50.00 to cover the cost of sample preparation, postage, and computer analysis of each laboratory's results.

International Conference on Rheumatology

The Royal National Hospital for Rheumatic Diseases will hold its 250th anniversary international conference on rheumatology on the 14-16 April 1988. It will cover historical perspectives and future directions of rheumatological research, including pharmacology, genetics, and immunology. Further details from the Co-ordinator, Rheumatology 250, Royal National Hospital for Rheumatic Diseases, Upper Borough Walls, Bath BA1 1RL, UK.