

Annals of the Rheumatic Diseases

A journal of clinical rheumatology and
connective tissue research

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is much more comprehensive. There follow brief reviews of events in inflammation and the likely mechanism of action of anti-inflammatory compounds together with a description of their biochemical effects and of standard assays for anti-inflammatory activity. Almost one third of the book is then devoted to a detailed description not only of the structure of each of the standard anti-inflammatory agents but also of the chemical processes by which they are synthesised. A brief chapter reviews recent trends in formulation, including carrier systems, the osmotic pump, and transdermal drug delivery. The final chapters deal with the metabolism of anti-inflammatory agents and the side effects that result from their use.

The reviews are comprehensive and well referenced up to the end of 1984. The book is felt by the editor to provide a useful introduction to the subject, though it is likely to be more widely read by industrial scientists, particularly chemists, than by clinicians.

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H A BIRD

Computers in Rheumatology. ARC Conference Proceedings. No 1. Pp. 111. £5.00. Arthritis and Rheumatism Council: London. 1987.

This is a report of a two day 'state of the art' conference held at The London Hospital in June 1986 and is the first in a series of forthcoming 'ARC reports'. The early part of the proceedings consist largely of individual reports on the computerisation of clinical projects of varying complexity. Many of the systems were later on display and, under-

standably, the reports do not fully reflect the vitality of the first day. One message comes across loud and clear, however; computerisation does not save time and effort, but its successful rise is rewarded by increased accuracy and efficiency.

The last, and more readily digestible, part is devoted to reports of the chairmen of workshops charged with investigating the potential of computers in certain aspects of rheumatology, such as a diagnostic index, medical audit, research, and medical records, including word processing. The workshops draw upon the expertise of systems designers, statisticians, and epidemiologists and produce useful guidelines. The need for clear objectives is stressed, the problems of software unsuitability and incompatibility discussed and contrasted with the relatively less severe difficulties of hardware choice, and potential sources of help and advice indicated. Reading this section it becomes clear how closely the various applications inter-relate. A diagnostic index, for example, can generate material for clinical management, for audit, and for research. In the field of audit alone the first skirmishes have taken place, and the prospect of a computer war between the district mainframe and the departmental micro is chilling, to say the least.

The proceedings are well summarised and, in a bewildering and rapidly changing field, point the way to future developments. The involvement of the BSR, through its computer subcommittee, is encouraging.

(This review written on 'Easyscript' in a Commodore 64 linked to an Epson RX 80 printer in 'enhanced mode' via a Micro Peripherals tripler—all expletives deleted.)

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R A STURGE

Notes

Hellenic Society for Rheumatology

The XIth Panhellenic Congress of Rheumatology with International Participation will take place in Athens on 1-3 December 1988. The topics will be 'Autoantibodies in rheumatic diseases' and 'Immunomodulation in the treatment of rheumatic diseases'. Further information from Dr D Karras, 50 Kallidromiou Street, 114 73 Athens, Greece.

IVth Mediterranean congress of rheumatology

The congress will be held in Istanbul, Turkey on 2-3 June 1988. Topics will include juvenile chronic arthritis, familial Mediterranean fever, and amyloidosis associated with rheumatic diseases. Details from Professor Nihat Dilsen, President of the Congress, VIP Tourism Pirinccioglu Inc, Cumhuriyet Cad 269/2 Harbiye, Istanbul, Turkey.

XVII Congress of the Spanish Society of Rheumatology

This Congress will be held in Barcelona from 18 to 21 May 1988. Further information from Dr P. Barceló, Garcia, Hospital Malalties Reumàtiques, Passeig de Josep Carner, 31, 08004 Barcelona.

Back pain: current concepts and recent advances

The 2nd European Congress on this topic will be held in Montreux, Switzerland on 4-6 May 1988. Further information from the Congress Secretariat, 30 Deane Way, Ruislip, Middlesex HA4 8SX, England.

1st Mediterranean symposium on Behçet's disease

This symposium will be held in Istanbul, Turkey on 4 June 1988. Details from Professor Nihat Dilsen, President of the Congress, VIP Tourism Pirinccioglu Inc, Cumhuriyet Cad 269/2 Harbiye, Istanbul, Turkey.

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