

Book review

Diagnostic Function Tests in Chemical Pathology

P. T. Lascelles, D. Donaldson. Kluwer Academic Publishers, Dordrecht, 1989, 217 pp.

This book provides an accessible and fairly comprehensive source of information for performing a wide range of biochemical investigations. Various aspects of biochemical tests for assessment of physiological reserve function involving loading, prolonged fasting, exercise and clearance studies are covered, using a concise, comprehensive and easily understandable approach. The range of tests described is reasonably comprehensive; not only have some older ones been retained but also some recently introduced ones have been included.

Discussion of each test includes sub-headings, such as principle, indication, patient preparation, protocol, sample handling, normal response interpretation and comment; the text certainly provides all that one needs to know from the ward point of view. The authors' long-standing experience in the practice of chemical pathology on a broad-based approach has helped them in providing such an invaluable book on the subject. I have no doubt that different categories of people, including hospi-

tal doctors, nurses, biochemists, medical laboratory scientific officers, general practitioners and medical students, will find the book useful. Researchers will find the book handy in designing study protocols.

The investigations have been listed in alphabetical order, and much care has been taken to provide a comprehensive index which includes both clinical diagnoses and technical terms. Appendices I, II and III provide further information on the general principles and specific details of patient preparation and specimen collection, handling and transportation.

The small size of the book is deceptive. The content is rich in information, both fundamental and practical. The narrative style is crisp and direct. The publication is wide-ranging in its scope and provides useful information for laboratories in both the industrialized and the developing world such as ours. It is an excellent reference work that no laboratory should be without.

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