

**Adverse drug reactions in the differential diagnosis of GI and liver diseases.** Edited by Johannes Bircher. (pp 528. £15.00). London: Baillière Tindall, 1988. (Clinical gastroenterology, vol 2, no 2).

This book is part of a series of 'in depth' review texts which aim to give up-to-date and detailed insight into clinical and research developments in gastroenterological practice. In its foreword, the editor states that the objective of the book is to give a compilation of adverse drug reactions in the gastrointestinal tract and liver. An international team of contributors attempt to fulfil this aim.

Undoubtedly, iatrogenic disease is of great importance and deserves particular attention by all practising clinicians. To devote a volume of this eminent *Clinical gastroenterology* series to this problem is laudable but the end product is rather dry and uninspiring. The contributions vary greatly in their style but most oscillate between descriptions of the mechanisms of drug-induced damage and long lists of side effects attributable to individual drugs.

Chapters cover drug-induced damage in the oesophagus and stomach, malabsorption, diarrhoea, constipation, pancreatitis and a wide range of drug-related liver disorders. The coverage is extremely broad and well referenced with many 1987 papers quoted. Some controversial and topical issues such as the role of aspirin and non-steroidal anti-inflammatory agents in gastrointestinal bleeding are discussed in fair detail but other areas such as halothane and the liver are treated rather superficially.

It is attractive for the gastroenterologist to have close to hand a well referenced compact volume detailing adverse drug reactions in the gastrointestinal tract. Nonetheless, in clinical practice, most doctors will choose to consult their pharmacy department or drug information service if they suspect a drug problem and will likely obtain information which will be at least as up-to-date and probably more comprehensive. Thus, I question the value of a 'book of lists'. The more readable sections of the book deal with mechanisms of drug injury and yet this is peripheral to the stated aims of the volume and some of the contributors have shied away from detailed discussion of this aspect.

This volume will be of practical value to the clinician with a gastrointestinal interest who has limited access to a drug information service. It will serve as a reference book but will rapidly become dated. I shall continue to consult with my colleagues in the Pharmacy Department.

BC

**The kidney and hypertension in diabetes mellitus.** Edited by Carl Erik Mogensen. (pp 423. £80.95). Boston: Nijhoff, 1988. (Topics in renal medicine, 6).

The development of nephropathy as a complication of type I diabetes is of major importance. The 40 per cent of patients who develop persistent proteinuria have a 40-fold increased mortality rate when compared with age- and sex-matched control subjects. Only one in four of diabetic patients diagnosed as having persistent proteinuria survive for 10 years. Many believe that nephropathy is part of a process of malignant angiopathy. Recent studies have shown that early monitoring of urinary albumin excretion can predict later development of established nephropathy and that the progress of the disease can be slowed by therapeutic intervention.

The above text is a multi-author review which covers, comprehensively, the pathology, pathophysiology and treatment of both renal disease and hypertension in diabetes. Among the topics covered are early renal hyperfunction, prevalence and incidence of microalbuminuria, diabetic nephropathy and pregnancy and the effect of antihypertensive therapy on the course of renal function. The authors are well-established international authorities and have produced an up-to-date and valuable reference work, which should, as the editor hopes for in his introduction, stimulate further advancement in this important clinical area. As a book I recommend it to all serious students of diabetes.

ABA

**Color atlas of AIDS.** By Alvin E Friedman-Kien. (pp 300. £25.00). Philadelphia: Saunders, 1988.

This beautifully produced colour atlas is written by the physician who first described the association between Kaposi's sarcoma in young homosexual men. In fact, an alternative title for this work could have been 'Kaposi's sarcoma and other manifestations of HIV disease', as 80 pages of the book are dedicated to the manifestations of Kaposi's sarcoma, its diagnosis clinically and microscopically, its ultrastructure, and differential diagnoses. There are 333 colour plates in all (22 dedicated to Kaposi's sarcoma). The remainder of the book gives a concise account of the development of the epidemic, the identification of the virus, and other clinical manifestations, especially dermatological ones. The text is not detailed enough to make this a work for specialists in the field of HIV although it is well referenced. It would be a very useful book for general medical departments and general practitioners who increasingly will be expected to recognise cutaneous and other manifestations of HIV disease. The text provides a guide to relevant microbiology investigations. At £25.00 it would seem too expensive for medical students, but it is a book which could usefully be carried by medical libraries for reference by students.

RDM