

Cutaneous Side Effects of Drugs. By Konrad Bork, M.D. W.B. Saunders Company, Philadelphia, 1988 (422 pp, \$95.00)

Cutaneous Side Effects of Drugs, by Dr. Konrad Bork, represents a major effort at collecting a huge volume of information and bringing it together in a single text. The result is a comprehensive, well organized, and beautifully illustrated book covering cutaneous drug reactions ranging from the standard diffuse macular and papular "drug rash" to the more striking linear pigmentation following administration of certain chemotherapeutic agents. Following a historical overview and discussion of general principles regarding drug side effects, the text is organized by category of cutaneous reaction including, among many others, urticarial, bullous, purpuric, vasculitic, acneiform, lichenoid, necrotizing, photosensitive, eczematous, granulomatous, and erythrodermic. Also included, and what makes this an especially valuable reference, are chapters on drug reactions involving the hair, nails, teeth, and oral mucosa. Chapters on functional reactions such as pruritus and flushing, various dermatoses that may be exacerbated by drugs, and cutaneous reactions from drug additives rather than from the active components, also provide useful information.

As might be expected in a book that tries to cover so many topics, the text is sometimes superficial. However, in almost every area, an attempt is made to provide information regarding the pathogenesis of the different cutaneous reactions and, in many instances, this is dealt with in detail. The discussion is probably more often limited by the availability of facts regarding these reactions than by the desire to be brief. While a majority of the text is written in an easily comprehensible style, there are notable instances when the content is ambiguous or nonsensical. This would appear to be a result of

translation from German to English because it is generally the order or choice of words that provides the confusion. Neither of these problems poses a significant drawback to the overall value of the text. A disadvantage to those of us who speak only English is that a number of the references are in German or in French.

A major strong point of this book is its excellent organization, which makes the information contained within readily available. The index is in two parts, one listing the forms of cutaneous reactions and the other the generic names of the drugs, including over 800 entries. For reactions in which many drugs have been implicated, charts are included which list the drugs by general category for which they are used (e.g., antibiotics, analgesics, gastrointestinal drugs) as well as by the frequency at which they have been noted to cause that reaction. Another appealing aspect to this text is the strikingly clear illustrations which, especially for the more unusual cutaneous reactions, are highly instructive and useful in the clinical setting.

In summary, Bork's *Cutaneous Side Effects of Drugs* provides an excellent reference to anyone involved in clinical dermatology, whether in private practice or in an academic setting. While this is not an in-depth examination of the basis of specific drug side effects, a general overview and references are provided. It is written and organized in a way that makes the information it contains easily accessible and the photographs provide a clear and memorable image of the multiple manifestations of drug interactions with the skin.

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Biology of Heritable Skin Diseases. Edited by K. D. Wuepper and T. Gedde-Dahl, Jr.: Current Problems in Dermatology, Vol. 17. Basel, Karger Publishers, 1987 (254 pp)

This volume contains papers from the 35th Annual Symposium on the Biology of the Skin, Gleneden Beach, Oregon, October 1985 and the European Society for Dermatology Research Clinically Oriented International Symposium, Oslo, February 1986. This book is a combination of 18 separate papers which are grouped under the topics genetic principles, the epidermis, the junction zone and the dermis, DNA repair, and animal models. It presents many excellent reviews of broad subject areas. One paper presents convincing evidence in favor of a causal relationship between X chromosome inactivation and the lines of Blaschko. Two chapters present excellent reviews of monoclonal and polyclonal antibody basement membrane zone characterization in epidermolysis bullosa. The review chapter on the collagens of the skin as well as on the molecular biology of osteogenesis imperfecta and clinical and genetic heterogeneity of the Marfan syndrome present useful up-to-date basic science information on these disorders of connective tissue.

Chapters grouped under the heading "The Epidermis" review the biochemical abnormalities in ichthyosis, the group of disorders associated with trichothiodystrophy and the abnormal keratinizations seen in the rare syndrome of restrictive dermopathy. In this syndrome fetal movements are restricted because of rigid tightly adherent skin.

Two chapters reveal new information studying DNA repair in Xeroderma pigmentosum. The final three chapters on animal models present the dermatologists with information about cutaneous diseases in animals that are similar to diseases that we recognize in humans.

Overall I found this book to be a valuable reference for specific diseases. This book combines specific basic science information with clinically relevant problems.

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