

BOOK REVIEWS

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Hepatology invites all readers who wish to review books for this journal to indicate their interest by informing the Book Editor. If there is a specific subject or subsubject that the potential reviewer prefers, he or she should so indicate. If there is a specific book in press that a reader would like to review, a note to this effect should be sent to the Book Editor.

Book reviews may be of any reasonable length. They should be written informally in the style of the reviewer. They should focus primarily on the contents and significance of this book, but may comment on any aspect of the book, such as style, appearance, type size, quality of illustrations, adequacy of index, cost or any other feature. Reviewers should feel free to enliven the review by quoting from it, giving examples and comparing it with other books or the classic in the field. If the reviewer feels that the book could have been organized better, the reviewer may suggest ways of reorganization. The reviewer should attempt to identify the group or subgroups for whom the book would have the greatest impact.

BOOKS RECEIVED FOR REVIEW:

Gastroenterology Clinics of North America. March 1988; Liver Transplantation; by Leonard Makowka and David H. Van Thiel; W. B. Saunders Publishers, 1988; 224 pages; \$28.00.

Surgery of the Liver; edited by William V. McDermott, Jr.; YearBook Medical Publishers, 1988; 560 pages; \$125.00.

Key Developments in Gastroenterology; edited by P. R. Salmon; John Wiley and Sons Publishers, 1988; 194 pages; \$54.75.

Viral Hepatitis and Liver Diseases; edited by A. J. Zuckerman; Alan R. Liss, Inc., 1988; 1,136 pages; \$350.00.

Hepatic Encephalopathy. Management with Lactulose and Related Carbohydrates. Edited by H. O. Conn and J. Bircher, 363 pp. East Lansing, Michigan: Med-Ed Press, 1988. \$49.00.

This book is primarily about the use of lactulose, lactitol and lactose in the treatment of hepatic encephalopathy. It reports the results of a workshop on that subject. Of the 25 chapters, 15 covering 219 pages (62% of the total) are concerned with various aspects of the use of these carbohydrates, including their chemistry, pharmacology, clinical pharmacology, adverse reactions and side effects, use in combination with antibiotics, effects on intestinal flora, cathartic properties, effects on bile acid and cholesterol metabolism and, of course, their use in the treatment of hepatic encephalopathy, both

acute and chronic, for which they are reasonably effective and useful. The information supplied in the various chapters is fairly extensive and valuable. The same cannot be said for the 127 pages (36%) devoted to a discussion of hepatic encephalopathy *per se*. These nine chapters serve primarily as an introduction to the main theme of the workshop on lactulose et al. As an introduction, they serve their purpose well, providing authoritative information on various states of hepatic encephalopathy, its pathogenesis, relation to GABA-ergic neurotransmission, role of nitrogen metabolism in the gut, endocrine aspects and dietary and amino acid management. A final chapter written by Sheila Sherlock and Harold Conn provides a useful perspective of the likely "state of the art" at the end of the next decade or two.

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Aging in Liver and Gastrointestinal Tract. Edited by L. Bianchi, P. Holt, O. F. W. James and R. N. Butler, 398 pp. Hingham, Massachusetts: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1988. \$102.00.

This book is the result of the 47th Falk Symposium held in Titisee, Federal Republic of Germany, June, 1987. As Dr. Robert Butler points out in the first chapter, relatively little is known about age-related changes in the liver and gastrointestinal tract. Furthermore, publications are spread through hundreds of different journals, so one important contribution of this book is the collection of relevant bibliographies into one volume.

This book consists of 36 chapters divided into six topic areas: (i) mechanisms of aging; (ii) aging effects on gut morphology and physiology; (iii) aging effects on liver morphology and physiology; (iv) liver drug metabolism and aging; (v) clinical aspects of aging in the gastrointestinal tract, and (vi) clinical applications. At the end of the book, Dr. Peter Holt summarizes age-related changes in the gastrointestinal tract and Dr. Popper summarizes the effects of age on the liver.

The different chapters are generally well-written and are uniform in style. The illustrations are clear, and the book is attractively produced. Researchers in the field of aging will find the volume useful in summarizing available results and suggesting further experiments that are needed. Hepatologists and gastroenterologists who want to know the details concerning aging effects on liver and