

Book Reviews

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Beurteilungskriterien für Chemotherapeutika

Fortschritte der Klinischen Pharmakologie, vol. 14
Urban & Schwarzenberg, München 1977

VI + 97 pp., 42 fig.; DM 28.—

ISBN 3-541-70114-5

This book, written in German, contains the Proceedings of the Austrian Workshop of Chemotherapeutics and of the Austrian Group for Clinical Pharmacology. The book consists of nine contributions which ought to show criteria, basic rules and latest knowledge in the field of antibacterial, tuberculostatic, mycostatic and cytostatic chemotherapy, on which practitioners, clinicians, microbiologists, pharmacologists and people working on admission committees for drugs can decide what to do in the broad field of chemotherapy. Judged from the standards set by the organizers, the contributions show that the frame was set too broadly. Only the first three contributions and the last one correspond with the topic of the symposium. The introductory lecture on pharmacokinetics gives a sharply defined, clear and critical insight, enlightened by examples, into pharmacokinetic models and their interpretations. In the second contribution, microbiological parameters are critically examined, for example, the *in vitro* test with all its sources of error, the importance of animal experiments, the very difficult interpretation of the effectiveness of antibiotics in clinical treatment, and the representation of an easily transformable practice-orientated formula for the therapeutic interpretation of the susceptibility of bacteria as well as for the help in dosage regimes. The side effects of 25 antibiotics, chemotherapeutics and tuberculostatic agents are clearly demonstrated in table form. A very important contribution to the main topic is the fundamental comment on the transferability of results obtained by cytostatic therapy in animal experiments in man. In the mycological and mycobacteriological section of the printed proceedings, topical resistance patterns of microorganisms as well as dosages and side effects of the chemotherapeutics are given. Although the book only fulfills the expectations of its title and its

introduction to some degree, it can be recommended to colleagues working in practice and to research workers in the field of chemotherapy, especially because of the contributions discussed in detail.

U. Ullmann, Tübingen

B. Berde and H.O. Schild (Hrsg.)

Ergot Alkaloids and Related Compounds

Handbuch der experimentellen Pharmakologie,
vol. 49

Springer, Berlin 1978

XVIII + 1003 pp.; DM 280.—

ISBN 3-540-08475-4

Volume 49 of the well-known series of Heffter-Heubner's 'Handbuch der experimentellen Pharmakologie' is devoted to the ergot alkaloids. After a general introduction concerning the history, chemistry and basic pharmacology of the ergot alkaloids, the following subjects are discussed in separate chapters: effects on the uterus; actions on the heart and circulation; effects on the central nervous system; clinical pharmacology of ergot alkaloids in senile cerebral insufficiency; some compounds with hallucinogenic activity; influence on the endocrine system; metabolic effects; biopharmaceutical aspects; analytical methods, pharmacokinetics, metabolism and bioavailability; toxicologic considerations.

Virtually all imaginable properties and aspects of the ergot alkaloids have thus been dealt with. Accordingly, this monograph comprises the most complete and up-to-date survey on ergot alkaloids in the modern literature.

All chapters have been written by experts in the field, who all belong to the research laboratories of Sandoz, Basel. The expert knowledge on ergot alkaloids, gathered in these laboratories does not require any further recommendation.

This monograph is especially of interest to pharmacologists and it should be present in every pharmacological library.

P.A. van Zwieten, Amsterdam