This publication represents the proceedings of a symposium of the Eastern Pennsylvania Branch of the American Society for Nephrology. Despite its title, the goal is not to review the many sexually transmitted diseases of the genital tract, but rather to focus predominantly on newer aspects of the pathogenesis, laboratory diagnosis and treatment of urinary tract infections. The presentations are more in the nature of overviews than extensively detailed. They are, however, in most part adequately referenced.

Virulence factors associated with the capacity of bacteria to colonize the urinary tract are discussed. These include recent data on adherence or binding to uroepithelial cell receptor sites by pili of pyelonephritogenic Escherichia coli, on the increased density of mannose-resistant pilus receptor glycoconjugates in infection-prone females and on the antiadherence properties of the mucopo-lysaccharide coating of the bladder. Current manual, semiautomated and automated bacteruria screening are evaluated in the light of the current health care climate with its emphasis on cost containment and rapid turnaround time. Issues of sensitivity, specificity, prevalence and predictive value are alluded to. Current aspects of management of chlamydial and mycoplasmal infections of the urinary tract are presented as well as an overview of the acute urethral syndrome in females. An interesting application of nonradioactive DNA hybridization to clinical microbiology is discussed.

This could be a useful source to a nephrologist who is not up to date in a number of aspects of urinary tract infections which do not receive substantial attention in nephrology textbooks.

Edmund Bourke, MD

G.R.D. Catto (ed.)
New Clinical Applications
Nephrology
Calculation Disease

Of the four sections in this text, the longest (36%) focuses on the numerous causes of hypercalcemia despite the fact that in most of them renal calculous disease is rarely if ever a clinically important problem. Although lucidly presented, therefore, much of this information is superfluous to the title of the text. The next section (30%) is on hypercalciuria and uses the
classification which has been the focus of recent review articles – namely absorptive, renal and re-sorptive hypercalciuria. The potential side effects of currently advocated therapeutic regimens are appropriately alluded to and require consideration before embarking on the author’s six suggested selective treatments in different hypercalciuric settings.

Typographical errors including the non sequitur ‘Thiazide therapy is complicated by hypercalciuria, a consequence of hypokal-emia’ can be distracting and drew the attention of this reviewer to the fact that only 1 of 64 references in this section was less than 5 years old. The section on cystinuria (17%) is readable with an update on the potential therapeutic roles of sodium restriction, glutamine administration, captopril, ascorbic acid and mercaptopropionylglycine. Some of this space, however, could have been profitably used to expand on the role of uric acid, a commoner culprit in the pathogenesis of urolithiasis. Much important recent data is crammed into the fourth and shortest section of the text, on recurrent calculi. The five risk factors that have been identified in recurrent calcium stone formers in addition to and sometimes more important than hypercalciuria are alluded to. Thus the roles of urinary volume, pH, oxalate, uric acid and inhibitors of crystal growth are mentioned although the data should have been more extensively referenced. The data in this chapter should have been expanded at the expense of other areas and more lucidly presented. Anecdotal data such as that on plasma cholesterol and urolithiasis should have been omitted. Apparently opposing statements between the authors of the sections on recurrent calculi and hypercalciuria respectively could have benefited from better coordination. In a text with urological and nephrological authors, the relative approaches to metabolically active, surgically active and inactive stones would have helped the readers to whom it is addressed. Moreover an outline of the indications and contraindications for lithotripsy would have been useful.

Edmund Bourke, MD

Erratum

In the article by Costagliola et al., entitled ‘Anemia and Chronic Renal Failure: The Possible Role of the Oxidative State of Gluta-thione’, published in vol. 52, No. 1 (pp. 11-14), 1989, the affiliation of Drs Sorice and Di Benedetto should be corrected. They are working at the Department of Nephrology of the USL 44 in Naples and not at the University of Naples.