secretions were high enough". Ms Webber, who reviewed the paper when it was first submitted, is entitled to question the ACBT technique described in this study. However, the authors should have followed the statement "at a higher lung volume" by "when secretions were in the upper airways". The physiotherapy during the study was supervised throughout by the same physiotherapist who is experienced and has a special interest in cystic fibrosis. The authors are therefore confident that the ACBT method used fulfils all of the characteristics of a satisfactory technique.

The only independent arbiters of the method used are the patient subjects themselves. One of the authors (RN) has therefore personally interviewed six of the more mature and easily available subjects who are known to carry out treatment of their fibrosis conscientiously. Each was first informed that a leading authority on the use of physiotherapy in cystic fibrosis had questioned the method of ACBT used and the validity of our findings, and that we needed to investigate whether the ACBT that they had been taught was correct. Each subject was asked the same non-committal question: "During ACBT, what characteristic must be fulfilled before you change from mid to low volume huffing to high volume huffing?" In each case the answer was when secretions are felt in the large upper airways. All have agreed that their names, addresses, and telephone numbers may be supplied to the editor if required.

We are therefore confident that patients under the care of the Newcastle Cystic Fibrosis Clinic are being taught and are performing ACBT correctly, and that the method used in the study was that described in the published version. We are equally confident that ACBT was used correctly during the study, and that it provides a true comparison between ACBT and autogenic drainage.

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BOOK NOTICES

Pulmonary Fibrosis. Sem Hin Phan, Roger S Thrall. (Pp 984; \$235.00). New York: Marcel Dekker, 1995. 0 8247 8851 6.

Pulmonary fibrosis arises in various clinical settings. It may be a sequel to occupational dust exposure, radiation, or chemotherapy. It can accompany connective tissue disease, follow acute lung injury, or arise alone as cryptogenic fibrosing alveolitis (idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis). In all cases the result is worsening breathlessness and a progressive restrictive ventilatory defect. The pathogenesis remains incompletely understood. Current treatments are inadequate and the prognosis generally poor. This is the first time that the excellent series on "Lung Biology in Health and Disease" has addressed this subject. Significant advances have recently been made in our knowledge of lung physiology, mechanisms of its response to injury, and the nature of fibrogenesis, both in the lung and in other organs. This volume is therefore very welcome.

The book comprises 25 chapters covering clinical aspects, pathology and physiology, extracellular matrix biochemistry, mechanisms of injury by agents such as bleomycin, hyperoxia, asbestos and radiation, the roles of cells and cytokines in fibrogenesis, and the possible involvement of platelet activating factor, complement and coagulation pathways. Finally, it devotes a chapter to future perspectives.

This is a collection of well written, extensively referenced accounts by experts in their fields. Each chapter provides state of the art information and introduces new perspectives. I especially enjoyed the chapters on pathology, bleomycin, alveolar epithelial cells and fibroblasts. Disappointingly, the clinical introduction presents a somewhat confusing classification that is not adhered to elsewhere in the book. There are frequent typographical errors, inconsistencies in illustration style, and the book might have benefited from more careful editing.

Nevertheless, as a compendium of current research it is indispensable to researchers. Clinicians will find limited guidance on patient management, but every teaching hospital library should purchase a copy, and all respiratory departments should have access to it. Let's hope your library purchases a copy; at \$235.00 it may be beyond most individuals. – RC

Asthma and Rhinitis. William W Busse, Stephen T Holgate. (Pp 1488; £150.00). Oxford: Blackwell Scientific Publications, 1995. 0 865 42246 X.

This is a large, expensive book, although its weight and quality of authorship is, in the event, equalled by its weight of knowledge. Being multi-author there is occasional (sometimes irritating) overlap of areas covered. The index could be improved – a referral to "the characteristic histology of steroid resistant asthma" being dealt with elsewhere resulted in a fruitless search. Of the 1500 pages less than 10% are given to treatment/management. The feel is, therefore, of a book aimed more at the scientist than the clinician but, for the clinician with a scientific bent, this book holds a great deal of reasonably accessible information. A problem recently enumerated but long recognised is that text books are significantly out of date by the time they are published. This is inevitable and this book is no exception, although it can justly claim to be the most up to date text available. For instance, recent areas of major debate in the field of asthma are the possible role of air pollution in asthma and whether β agonists make asthma worse. I could find about half a page overall on air pollution and only passing mention of the β agonist debate. Nevertheless, the whole area of asthma and rhinitis is changing by the moment – updating a book of this size is just not possible using the printed page format. The advent of books such as this on CD ROM will surely reduce the lag between scientific advance and incorporation in the written word, and must be the way these volumes have to move as they will allow selective updates in those areas which advance the fastest. My criticisms are, however, minor and I can fully recommend this book for the active medical library, although individuals may find the cost prohibitive even though it works out at just 10p per page! – JGA

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0171 383 6244. Fax 0171 383 6662. Books are supplied post free in the UK and for BFPO addresses. Overseas customers should add 15% for postage and packing. Payments can be made by cheque in sterling drawn on a UK bank or by credit card (Mastercard, Visa, or American Express) stating card number, expiry date, and full name. (The price and availability are occasionally subject to revision by the Publishers.)

NOTICES

European Asthma School

A three-day intensive course on experimental and clinical aspects of asthma will be held in Ghent, Belgium on 21–23 November 1995. For further information contact the Department of Respiratory Diseases, University Hospital, De Pintelaan 185, B9000 Ghent, Belgium. Phone: 32-9-2402611. Fax: 32-9-2402341.

Occupational asthma in practice

A course on "Occupational asthma in practice" will be held at the National Heart and Lung Institute and Royal Brompton Hospital on 7 and 8 November 1995. Course organiser: Dr K M Venables. Enquiries to Conference Centre, telephone 0171 351 8172 (24 hour answering service). Fax 0171 376 3442.

Mechanisms and treatment of airway inflammation in asthma and COPD

A meeting on "Mechanisms and treatment of airway inflammation in asthma and COPD: an update", organised under the patronage of the Italian Chapter of the American College of Chest Physicians, will take place in Taormina from 30 November to 2 December 1995. For further information contact the Organising Secretariat at Studio Santuccio SNC, 95124 Catania, Via Francesco Battiato 9, Italy. Telephone +39 95 317785/320999. Fax +39 95 320999 or the Scientific Secretariat at Istituto di Malattie Respiratorie, 95125 Catania, Via Passo Gravina 187, Italy. Telephone and fax +39 95 7594532.

CORRECTION

Lung injury in patients following thoracotomy

In the paper entitled "Lung injury in patients following thoracotomy" by J P Hayes *et al* which appeared on pages 990–1 of the September issue, lines 10–12 of the second paragraph of the Discussion on page 991 should have read "... our own incidence of 4.9% following pneumonectomy is broadly comparable".