

REVIEW

URIC ACID LITHIASIS by Abraham Atsmon, Andre De Vries, & Menachem Frank. Elsevier Publishing Company. 1963. 47 Tables, 48 Illus., pp. 252 + ix. Price Unmarked.

The authors have presented in this monograph a detailed and comprehensive account of uric acid stone that will be of interest to both the surgeon and physician. Many aspects have been covered, from a short historical account of stone disease to the clinical, biochemical and laboratory, and radiological facets of uric acid stones and culminating in a brief review of treatment and prevention together with the results obtained in the author's series of 213 patients.

Uric acid lithiasis is certainly far from being an innocuous condition as they may cause much suffering and severe, even fatal, renal damage. The relationship of urolithiasis to metabolic disorders such as hyperparathyroidism, gout, cystinuria, and hyperoxaluria has in recent years become more increasingly suspected and recognised. This is similarly true with regard to uric acid lithiasis. Quite a large percentage however have tendered to be regarded as idiopathic and a better understanding as to the underlying cause of the disorder is required. This problem is fairly well gone into in the various chapters of the book particularly in the chapters on aetiology and pathogenesis. An interesting new entity, that of inherited uric acid lithiasis is described and the authors put forth cogent arguments to support their assumption that in certain families inherited

uric acid lithiasis constitutes a nosological entity distinct from gout.

The book also contains good sections on diagnosis and treatment. Uric acid lithiasis being amenable to prevention and treatment by medical measures and renal damage being dependent on length of time stones have been present, early diagnosis of this condition becomes of utmost importance. A list of simple criteria based on history, clinical and laboratory findings enabled the authors to make a presumptive diagnosis of uric acid lithiasis in about 100 kidney stone patients from whom no stone was available for examination. This list provides a simple screening guide and can be quite readily and easily adopted by most clinics for use in practice. The main principles of treatment and prevention are also well given in the last chapter and the higher degree of success obtained from use of alkalinising treatment and higher fluid intake is quite surprising and worth noting.

There have not been many books written about this subject and anyone who has a special interest in urology and metabolic disorders should I think find this interesting monograph well worth reading.

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