

# Medical Topics

## Lactose content of Tube feeding diets — A major cause of diarrhoea

The lactose content of liquid diets commonly used for nasogastric tube feedings is a major cause of diarrhoea and other gastrointestinal disturbances according to a recent study presented at the American Laryngological, Rhinological and Otolological Society in California.

Drs Barbara Walike and Josef Walike, Seattle stated that: "The lactose tolerance test distinguished only two of the nine patients (in the trial) who demonstrated increased stool frequency on the lactose containing diet. It is, therefore, not an adequate test for determining the need for a lactose-free diet in tube feeding patients."

They believed that a relative lactose intolerance or the inability to completely utilize a large load of lactose was probably present in the great majority of adults — even those with lactose tolerance tests which were considered normal.

This relative lactose intolerance would be clinically unimportant except under conditions where the size of the load of lactose challenged the patient's ability to hydrolyze the lactose.

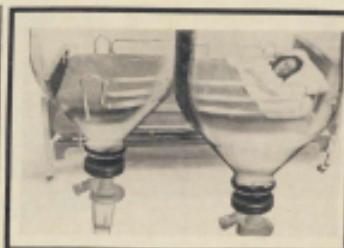
"This lactose deficiency may become clinically significant where large amounts of lactose are included in the diet as is common for tube-fed patients.

Lactose content may also be a significant cause of gastrointestinal disturbance in adult patients who ingest large quantities of milk, for example ulcer patients or pregnant women."

The authors therefore conclude that the elimination of lactose from tube feeding diets would reduce the gastrointestinal side effects frequently seen in hospitals.

They point out that it has been demonstrated that lactose intolerance is present in almost all adult non-human mammals and in most of the world's people with only a few exceptions.

In their study at Seattle the authors included 11 patients for a mean of 9.4 days on two different diets — one containing no



lactose and the other a lactose content of 7 per cent.

Most patients had two to four times more stools on the lactose containing diet with one patient having 12 times more stools.

Only two of the patients showed no difference between the number of stools on the two diets and nine of the patients were found to be lactose intolerant.

For further information circle No 208

## Cyclists dietary fallacies revealed in latest "S.A. Sports Medicine"

There are still cyclists who believe that Vitamin B<sub>12</sub> injection should be given at regular intervals.

However, there is no reliable evidence to show that Vitamin B<sub>12</sub> has any beneficial effect on human performance, Dr D P van Velden, Director of the Students' Health Service at the University of the Orange Free State, points out in his paper, "Diet, Nutrition for Cyclists: Some Facts and Fallacies" published in the most recent issue of "S.A. Sports Medicine".

Published by Boehringer Ingelheim (Pty) Limited, "S.A. Sports Medicine" issue six, in addition to Dr van Velden's comprehensive appraisal of the importance of diet to the cyclist, features articles on the treatment of sports injuries with a long

acting local anaesthetic, medical considerations pertaining to boxers as well as a review on medical academic views on running.

"Cyclists also believe that a high protein diet is necessary to satisfy the unique nutritional requirements of athletes."

During exercise, Dr van Velden adds, protein is not an important energy source. The body uses carbohydrate in preference to fat as a source of energy for most of its activities. Proportionally less oxygen is required for burning up carbohydrates.

Discussing heat injury, Dr van Velden observes that cyclists do not appear to have the same problem of heat injury as that experienced by marathon runners, mainly because of the cooling effect of the wind on the body. "The cyclist can also carry an adequate fluid supply with him to utilise when necessary to combat dehydration."

In his paper, "The Effect of Exercise on Sleep", Dr C M Shapiro, of the Department of Physiology at the University of the Witwatersrand, discusses the results of a study on Comrades Marathon participants.

A significant finding in the study was that a marked increase in slow-wave-sleep was shown following the Comrades to suggest that short-wave-sleep does form some recovery process for daytime stress.

In addition to a review of some of the more interesting sports medicine topics covered in recently published world medical literature, "S.A. Sports Medicine" also features an interview with Dr Ali Bacher, Springbok cricket captain — turned administrator, in the section, "Me and My Sport".



For further information circle No 209



## Strapping for the Lions

If the 1980 Lions are anything like previous rugby touring teams in South Africa, they should seize an opportunity to buy strapping material at special-offer prices, and to simultaneously obtain a free book describing correct strapping techniques.

Some teams which have toured South Africa during the past 10 years or so, used enough strapping to cover the white lines on most highways around the Witwatersrand.

And to see players of all ages and at all levels wrapping a lengthy piece of strapping around a wobbly ankle or knee, would have been funny if their ignorance was not rather sad.

"In South Africa we are far behind the rest of the world in some fields of sports medicine. One of those fields is that of strapping joints and muscles," says Dr Clive Noble.

Judged from the way some overseas rugby teams strap up, they could also use to great advantage the publication "A Guide to Elastoplast Strapping Techniques".

The booklet, compiled by former Springbok hockey goalkeeper Ponky Firer, is available free from Smith and Nephew Ltd, PO Box 92, Pinetown, 3600.

WW

For further information circle No 207