Chronic Diarrhea in Children

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To

PROFESSOR ERWIN NETER

pioneer and researcher in diarrhea of infancy, who,
in the pursuit of excellence, inspired us all
Preface

Infantile diarrhea is a well-recognized problem, not only because of the magnitude of its associated morbidity and mortality and its worldwide occurrence, but also because of its inherent complexity both from the clinical and scientific points of view.

From January 31 to February 4, 1983, an international workshop was organized in Caracas, Venezuela, sponsored by Nestlé Nutrition, for the purpose of critically examining the various issues related to the problem of infantile diarrhea. Nearly 30 internationally recognized researchers spoke on different topics and a total of about 60 participants, representing the leaders in the field of pediatric gastroenterology and nutrition from various industrialized and developing countries, contributed to the overall program.

This volume represents a significant part of the fruit of this international workshop, the aim of which was to bring into focus the recent advances and knowledge in infantile diarrhea, particularly the determinants mediating the perpetuation of acute diarrhea, chronic diarrhea, and the demise of the child. The expertise of the several speakers provides a broad survey of various studies and clinical experience representing the state of the art of this disease complex. Additional chapters were written by invited authors, in order to make the volume more comprehensive.

The volume opens with an overview that presents a conceptual framework of the magnitude of chronic diarrhea in infancy. This is followed by a series of chapters discussing the anatomical, physiological, and biochemical changes in the gastrointestinal tract of the affected infants. The emphasis is then shifted to the possible mechanisms involved in the infantile diarrheal disease. The volume concludes with new approaches and modalities of intervention, including the most recent protocol of nutritional therapy for prolonged diarrhea.

This timely and comprehensive volume should be useful as a reference for pediatricians, gastroenterologists, neonatologists, nutritionists, and various other ancillary professionals who are involved in the care of children with chronic diarrhea.

EMANUEL LEBENTHAL, M.D.
Foreword

Chronic diarrhea and its sequelae, malnutrition and secondary infection, are among the most frequent causes of death in the developing world. Thus, it seemed important that, early in the course of our Nestlé Nutrition Workshop series, we should examine this subject. A complete understanding of the determinants that lead from acute to chronic diarrhea is still not available to pediatricians, and a great deal more collaboration between those involved in basic research and clinical work is needed.

Nestlé Nutrition was pleased to organize this meeting of a large number of pediatricians from different parts of the world, with different concerns that ranged from basic research to the care of babies in critical condition. We hope that the findings of this meeting will contribute toward a better understanding of this problem, and ultimately to the better care of children. We would also wish that the enthusiasm of all the participants, led by Emanuel Lebenthal, in addressing this devastating disease might be carried over to the readers of this important volume.


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