early changes of Crohn’s disease on CT. The authors claim, however, that as CT is costly under any health care system, radiologists should make the supreme effort to glean every piece of information from such a sophisticated study, and who can argue with them?

The eight chapters cover technique, oesophagus, stomach, duodenum, small intestine, colon, percutaneous drainage for abdominal abscesses/liquid collections, and finally a radiological/pathological correlation in selected gastrointestinal diseases. In all chapters the discussion is full and the illustrations superb. I would have liked a summary at the end of each section. There seemed no reason moreover for including renal abscess drainage in the penultimate chapter. Small and large bowel chapters are especially strong, with a galaxy of images. Computed tomography is presented as less invasive than a barium enema, particularly in the elderly patient.

Images range from the subliminal (is it really necessary to invoke CT to diagnose sigmoid volvulus or faecal impaction?) to the sublime (two pages on the rare Buschke-Lowenstein tumour). There are 13 pages devoted to CT of appendicitis (whether clinical expertise?), and the book is right up to the AIDS mark with a clear demonstration of haemorrhagic CMV colitis.

Clearly CT of the gastrointestinal tract has come of age. It is a pity that it is used here in some patients who have already had a firm diagnosis made by simpler imaging techniques, particularly barium studies. It does cover much new ground, but will be a reference book rather than a daily companion.

ROBERT DICK

Gastrointestinal oncology Edited by J W L Fielding and T J Priestman. (Pp. 330; illustrated; £45.00.) Tunbridge Wells: Castle House Publications, 1986. The authors are to be congratulated on producing an up-to-date work on gastrointestinal oncology which is well presented and easy to read. The pitfalls in the interpretation of the results of treating advanced cancer are discussed and should be essential reading for anyone involved in even the most peripheral aspects of cancer chemotherapy.

The book has been divided into two sections: the first is general and deals with aetiology, therapy, histopathology and population screening. The second section consists of 12 chapters which take us through the management of gastrointestinal cancers. These are well presented by clinicians who have special expertise in the management of particular gastrointestinal tumours. The individual chapters accordingly reflect the practices of the many contributors to this volume.

If I had to single out areas I enjoyed reading, I would select the general chapters on nutrition by Plumb, Fearon, and Calman, on aetiology by Hill and screening by Hardcastle. I felt the histopathology section could have delved into more detail but obviously the editors were constrained by space.

Some of the illustrations were rather difficult to interpret and clinical photographs not of good quality. Apart from the minor criticisms the book is well recommended for anyone treating gastrointestinal malignancy.

R C N WILLIAMSON


A revolution in clinical practice in the last two decades has been the increasing awareness of the importance of nutrition in good patient management. The techniques of both parenteral and enteral nutritional support have been constantly refined; so that the nutrition team found in most hospitals now has a central role in applying their expertise to many patients with a wide variety of diseases. Gastrointestinal patients usually predominate and to both the clinician with a special interest in nutrition and others this book will be of interest as it collates information to provide a review of nutrition in relation to gastrointestinal disease.

Nineteen distinguished authors consider 15 topics of concern in everyday clinical practice. The digestion and absorption of nutrients together with energy and nutrient requirements are reviewed as is the effect of nutritional depletion and its measurement. Enteral and parenteral nutrition are considered in detail while eight chapters are devoted to, nutritional care in surgical practice, the role of dietary fibre, malabsorption states, nutrition in inflammatory bowel disease and liver disease, alcohol and nutrition, food allergy and intolerance and paediatric disorders.

A particular feature is the up-to-date and comprehensive list of references provided at the end of each chapter.

There is almost too great a choice of books dealing with aspects of clinical nutrition, yet the authors are to be congratulated as the topics considered impinge on every aspect of gastrointestinal practice with something for everyone. I am sure this book will be widely used in both the hospital and personal library.