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PURINE METABOLISM IN MAN—III
Clinical and Therapeutic Aspects

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Preface

These volumes contain the papers which were presented at the Third International Symposium on Purine Metabolism in Man held in Madrid (Spain) in June, 1979. The previous meetings in the series were held in Tel Aviv (Israel) and in Baden (Austria) in 1973 and 1976, respectively. The proceedings were also published by Plenum.

Knowledge of the pathophysiology of the purines has developed greatly since the 1950's when it was mainly related to clinical gout, and it is now relevant to many fields of Medicine and Biology. These volumes include papers reporting new work on clinical gout and urolithiasis as well as on some of the subjects which have featured prominently in the previous volumes, including: regulatory aspects of the intermediary metabolism of purines and related compounds, enzymology, methodology, and the results of mutations which affect purine metabolism. However, there have been many new developments during the last three years and the scope of the communications reflects not only increasing depth of knowledge, but also a widening of the field. This publication has clinical and fundamental implications for internal medicine, pediatrics, urology, biochemistry, immunology, genetics, and oncology.

It is interesting to compare the scope of this volume with that of its predecessors. The main emphasis has shifted from the study of gout and the dissection of metabolic pathways to encompass investigations in the fields of oncology, immunology, and lymphocyte physiology. There are pointers to possible implications in relation to cardiology and neuromuscular diseases, which may well prove to be growing points for the future. In spite of considerable work on the mechanism of urinary stone formation, the inter-relationship between uric acid and calcium oxalate urolithiasis remains obscure.

It is no longer logical to discuss clinically related purine research without including comparable work in the less studied field of pyrimidine metabolism. Some such studies were reported at the Madrid meeting, and this development will be formally encouraged in the future.
The use of some animal and single cell models as tools with complexity intermediate between man and the single or multi-enzyme systems represents another new development in this area of clinical investigation.

We acknowledge the support which we received from the distinguished members of the scientific community who served on the Organizing and Scientific Committees, as well as their contributions to the high standards of the material presented.

We also thank the "Fundacion Jimenez Diaz" and the Autonomous University of Madrid, both of whom sponsored the meeting, the Department of Cultural Relations in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Madrid City Council and the Wellcome Research Laboratories (England) for their financial support, and Plenum Publishing Corporation (U.S.A.) for their assistance in the publication of the proceedings. The meeting would not have been possible without the cheerful and spirited help of Maria Luisa San Roman and Mireya Usano, and our special thanks are due to them.

A. Rapado
R.W.E. Watts
C.H.M.M. de Bruyn
Contents of Part A

I. CLINICAL GOUT

The Natural History of Hyperuricemia Among Asymptotic Relatives of Patients With Gout ................................. 1
T.-F. Yü and C. Kaung

The Clinical Differentiation of Primary Gout From Primary Renal Disease in Patients With Both Gout and Renal Disease .......... 9
B. T. Emmerson, P. J. Stride and G. Williams

Renal Failure in Young Subjects With Familial Gout ......................... 15
H. A. Simmonds, J. S. Cameron, C. F. Potter,
D. Warren, T. Gibson, and D. Farebrother

Family Study of Lipid and Purine Levels in Gout Patients and Analysis of Mortality .......... 21
L. G. Darlington, J. Slack, and J. T. Scott

Uric Acid Turnover in Normals, in Gout and in Chronic Renal Failure Using $^{14}$C-Uric Acid ...................................... 27
C. Vitali, G. Pasero, A. Clerico, L. Riente,
N. Molea, A. Pilo, G. Mariani, and R. Bianchi

Erythrocyte Adenosine-Deaminase Activity in Gout and Hyperuricemia ..................... 33
A. Carcassi, P. Macri, G. Chiaroni, and S. Boschi

Clinical Variability of the Gouty Diathesis ..................... 39
W. J. Arnold and R. A. Simmons
Clinical Features of 4,000 Gouty Subjects in Japan
N. Nishioka and K. Mikanagi

Frequency of Chondrocalcinosis of the Knees and Avascular Necrosis of the Femoral Heads in Gout, a Controlled Study
A. Stockman, L. G. Darlington, and J. T. Scott

Gaschromatographie Evaluation of Urinary 17-Ketosteroids, Etiocholanolone and Dehydroepiandrostone in Primary Gout and Hyperuricemia
A. Carcassi, F. Loré, G. Manasse, P. Macri, and M. Pisano

Hormonal Aspects of Gouty Patients
U. Valentini, G. Riario-Sforza, R. Marcolongo, and E. Marinello

Determination of Tubular Secretion of Urate in Healthy and Gouty Men
L. B. Sorensen and D. J. Levinson

Ribose Tolerance in Gouty Patients
M. Pizzichini, R. Marcolongo, and E. Marinello

II. URIC ACID AND RENAL STONES

Urinary Urate and Uric Acid Relative Saturation in Normouricuric Calcium Oxalate Stone Formers With Normal Urinary Calcium Oxalate Saturation
M. Labeeuw, C. Gerbaulet, N. Pozet, P. Zech, and J. Traeger

Correlation Between the Uric Acid and Calcium Concentration in Urine. Results of a Long Term Study on Recurrent Stone-Formers and Healthy Controls
P. Leskovar, R. Hartung, and M. Kratzer

Interaction of Hyperuricuria and Hyperoxaluria on Renal Calcium Oxalate Stone Formation
F. Hering, K.-H. Bigalke, and W. Lutzeyer

Uric Acid/Calcium Oxalate Nephrolithiasis. Clinical and Biochemical Findings in 86 Patients
A. Rapado, J.M. Castrillo, M. Diaz-Curiel, M. L. Traba, M. Santos, L. Cifuentes-Delatte
CONTENTS OF PART A

The Uric Acid: Cystine Correlation in the Urine of Recurrent Calcium Oxalate Stone-Formers and Healthy Controls ................. P. Leskovar, R. Hartung, and M. Kratzer

The Role of Urate in Idiopathic Calcium Urolithiasis ................. S. R. Silcock

Mineralogic Composition of 66 Mixed Urinary Calculi of Calcium Oxalate and Uric Acid ..................... J. R. Miñón-Cifuentes, M. Santos, and L. Cifuentes-Delatte

Hyperuricemia and Cystinuria .................. F. Linari, M. Marangella, B. Malfi, G. Vacha, M. Bruno, G. Giorcelli, and B. Fruttero

Monosodium Urate Monohydrate as Spherulites ............. J. J. Fiechtner and P. A. Simkin

III. CLINICAL AND PHYSIOLOGICAL ASPECTS OF PURINE METABOLISM

Tumoural Hypouricemia .................. A. Lesmes, M. Díaz-Curiel, and J. M. Castrillo

Hereditary Renal Hypouricemia With Hyperuricosuria and Variably Absorptive Hypercalciuria and Urolithiasis – A New Syndrome ............. O. Sperling and A. de Vries

Hereditary and Environmental Factors Influencing on the Serum Uric Acid Throughout Ten Years Population Study in Japan .......... K. Nishioka and K. Mikanagi

The Natural History of Urate Overproduction in Sickle Cell Anemia ........... H. S. Diamond, A. D. Meisel, and D. Holden

Salvage Pathway in Erythrocytes of Patients With Psoriasis ............. G. Partsch, F. Mayer, R. Eberl, and A. Luger

Serum 5-Nucleotidase in Progressive Muscular Dystrophy ............. F. Lâhoda and K. Baier
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Purine Metabolism in Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy</td>
<td>177</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. H. M. M. De Bruyn, S. Kulakowski, C. A. van Bennekom, P. Renoirte, and M. M. Müller</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metabolism of Adenine and Adenosine in Erythrocytes of Patients with Myotonic Muscular Dystrophy (MMD)</td>
<td>183</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M. M. Müller, M. Frass, and B. Mamoli</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clinical and Enzymological Studies in a Child With Type I Glycogen Storage Disease Associated With Partial Deficiency of Hepatic Glucose-6-Phosphatase</td>
<td>189</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G. Nuki and J. Parker</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Differential Absorption of Purine Nucleotides, Nucleosides and Bases</td>
<td>203</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. F. Potter, A. Cadenhead, H. A. Simmonds, and J. S. Cameron</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influence of Dietary Protein on Serum and Urinary Uric Acid</td>
<td>209</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W. Löffler, W. Gröbner, and N. Zöllner</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effect of Hypoxanthine in Meat on Serum Uric Acid and Urinary Uric Acid Excretion</td>
<td>215</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W. K. Spann, W. Gröbner, and N. Zöllner</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On the Mechanism of the Paradoxical Effect of Salicylate on Urate Excretion</td>
<td>221</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H. S. Diamond, G. Sterba, K. Jayadeven, and A. D. Meisel</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Uricosuric Action of Protein in Man</td>
<td>227</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F. Matzkies, G. Berg, and H. Mädl</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypoxic Effects on Purine Metabolism Studied With High Pressure Liquid Chromatography</td>
<td>233</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R. A. Harkness, R. J. Simmonds, and M. C. O'Connor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urate Metabolism in a Mongrel Dog</td>
<td>237</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P. A. Simkin</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CONTENTS OF PART A

IV. STUDIES ON XANTHINURIA

The Effect of Weight Reduction on Plasma and Urinary Levels of Oxypurines in an Obese Xanthinuric Patient ........................................ 241
C. Auscher, C. Pasquier, N. Amory, G. Gay, A. Aisènè, and G. Debry

Xanthinuria: The Cause of Hypouricemia in Hepatic Disease ............................ 247

Xanthine-Coproporphyrin III ........................................ 251
H. J. Castro-Mendoza

V. THERAPEUTICAL ASPECTS OF DISORDERS IN PURINE METABOLISM

A Controlled Study of the Effect of Long Term Allopurinol Treatment on Renal Function in Gout ........................................ 257
T. Gibson, H. A. Simmonds, C. Potter, and V. Rogers

Studies With Allopurinol in Patients With Impaired Renal Function .................... 263

Pharmacological Effects of 1,3,5-Triazines and Their Excretion Characteristics in the Rat ............ 269
M. Hropot, F. Sörgel, B. v. Kerékjártó, H. J. Lang, and R. Muschaweck

Tienilic Acid in the Treatment of Gout and Hypertension .................................. 277
T. Gibson, C. Potter, H. A. Simmonds, V. Rogers, and R. I. Gleadle

Benzbromarone as a Long-Term Uricosuric Agent ........................................ 283
R. Bluestone, J. Klinenberg, and I. K. Lee

The Action of Benzbromarone in Relation to Age, Sex and Accompanying Diseases ........ 287
H. Ferber, U. Bader, and F. Matzkies

Covalitin®: A New Drug for the Treatment of Uric Lithiasis ................................ 295
T. Covaliu
VI. MUTATIONS AFFECTING PURINE METABOLISM

A. Phosphoribosyltransferases

Hypoxanthine Salvage in Man: Its Importance in Urate Overproduction in the Lesch-Nyhan Syndrome

N. L. Edwards, D. P. Recker, and I. H. Fox

Aspect of Purine Metabolic Aberration Associated With Uric Acid Overproduction and Gout

L. C. Yip, T.-F. Yü, and M. E. Balis

Properties of a Mutant Hypoxanthine-Phosphoribosyltransferase in a Patient With Gout

W. Gröbner and W. Gutensohn

Variation in Human HPRT and Its Relationship to Neurologic and Behavioral Manifestations


High HPRT Activity in Fibroblasts from Patients With Lesch-Nyhan Syndrome due to Bacterial "L-Form" Contamination

I. Willers, S. Singh, K. R. Held, and H. W. Goedde

Kinetics of a HGPRT Mutant Showing Substrate Inhibition

E. H. Harley, C. M. Adnams, and L. M. Steyn

B. Nucleoside Phosphoribosylating Enzymes

Spectrum of 2,8-Dihydroxyadenine Urolithiasis in Complete APRT Deficiency

H. A. Simmonds, T. M. Barratt, D. R. Webster, A. Sahota, K. J. Van Acker, J. S. Cameron, and M. Dillon

Complete Adenine Phosphoribosyltransferase (APRT) Deficiency in Two Siblings: Report of a New Case

P. Cartier, M. Hamet, A. Vincens, J. L. Perignon

Inheritance of Adenine Phosphoribosyltransferase (APRT) Deficiency

K. J. Van Acker, H. A. Simmonds, C. F. Potter, and A. Sahota
Immunological Evaluation of a Family Deficient in Adenine Phosphoribosyl Transferase (APRT) 355
W. J. Stevens, M. E. Peetermans, and K. J. Van Acker

Activities of Amidophosphoribosyltransferase and Purine Phosphoribosyltransferases in Developing Rat Brain 361
J. Allsop and R. W. E. Watts

Purine Nucleoside Phosphorylase Deficiency; Genetic Studies in a Dutch Family 367

C. Nucleoside Cleaving Enzymes

Abnormal Regulation of Purine Metabolism in a Cultured Mouse T-Cell Lymphoma Mutant Partially Deficient in Adenylosuccinate Synthetase 375

Superactive Phosphoribosylpyrophosphate Synthetase With Altered Regulatory and Catalytic Properties 387
M. A. Becker, K. O. Raivio, B. Bakay, W. B. Adams, and W. L. Nyhan

AMP Phosphatase Activity in Human Term Placenta: Studies on Placental 5'-Nucleotidase 393
M. H. Maguire and T. P. Krishnanantha

D. Deaming Enzymes

Adenosine and Deoxyadenosine Metabolism in the Erythrocytes of a Patient With Adenosine Deaminase Deficiency 397
A. Sahota, H. A. Simmonds, C. F. Potter, J. G. Watson, K. Hugh-Jones, and D. Perrett

Complete Adenosine Deaminase (ADA) Deficiency Without Immunodeficiency, and Primary Hyperoxaluria, in a 12-Year-Old Boy 403
J. L. Perignon, M. Hamet, P. Cartier, and C. Griscelli
CONTENTS OF PART A

Metabolism of Adenosine and Deoxyadenosine
by Stored Human Red Cells .................. 409
G. R. Bartlett

Adenosine Deaminase and Purine Nucleoside
Phosphorylase Activities During
Culturing of Fibroblasts ...................... 415
M. P. Uitendaal, F. T. J. J. Oerlemans, C. H. M. M.
De Bruyn, T. L. Oei, and P. Hösli

S-Adenosylhomocysteine Metabolism in Adenosine
Deaminase Deficient Cells .................. 421
M. S. Hershfield and N. M. Kredich

Altered Deoxynucleoside Triphosphate Levels
Paralleling Deoxyadenosine Toxicity in
Adenosine Deaminase Inhibited Human
Lymphocytes ................................. 427
H. G. Bluestein, L. F. Thompson, D. A. Albert,
and J. E. Seegmiller

Author Index .................................. 433

Subject Index ................................. 437
Contents of Part B

I. PURINE METABOLISM PATHWAYS AND REGULATION

A. De Novo Synthesis: Precursors and Regulation

De Novo Purine Synthesis in Cultured Human Fibroblasts ........................................ 1

Comparative Metabolism of a New Antileishmanial Agent, Allopurinol Riboside, in the Parasite and the Host Cell .......................... 7

Purine Metabolism in Rat Skeletal Muscle ...................... 13
E.R. Tully and T.G. Sheehan

Alterations in Purine Metabolism in Cultured Fibroblasts with HGPRT Deficiency and with PRPP Synthetase Superactivity .......... 19
E. Zoref-Shani and O. Sperling

Purine Metabolism in Cultured Endothelial Cells ............ 25
S. Nees, A.L. Gerbes, B. Willershausen-Zönnchen, and E. Gerlach

Determinants of 5-Phosphoribosyl-1-Pyrophosphate (PRPP) Synthesis in Human Fibroblasts ........ 31
K.O. Raivio, Ch. Lazar, H. Krumholz, and M.A. Becker

Xanthine Oxidoreductase Inhibition by NADH as a Regulatory Factor of Purine Metabolism ...... 35
M.M. Jezewska and Z.W. Kamiński
B. **Nucleotide Metabolism**

Human Placental Adenosine Kinase: Purification and Characterization .......................... 41
C.M. Andres, T.D. Palella, and I.H. Fox

Long-Term Effects of Ribose on Adenine Nucleotide Metabolism in Isoproterenol-Stimulated Hearts . 45
H.-G. Zimmer, H. Ibel, G. Steinkopff, and H. Koschine

C. Salvage Pathways

Purine Salvage Enzymes in Man and *Leishmania donovani* .................. 51

Regulation of Purine Salvage Enzymes in *E. coli* ............. 57
R.A. Levine and M.W. Taylor

D. Catabolism

Purine Transport and the Cell Cycle ......................... 61
M.P. Rivera, M.R. Grau, J. Rigau, and A. Goday

Hypoxanthine Transport in Human Erythrocytes ............... 69
C. Salerno and Giacomello

Uptake of Adenosine in Human Erythrocytes .................. 73
M. Kraupp, P. Chiba, and M.M. Müller

Effect of Actinomycin D on *in vivo* Purine Biosynthesis in Hamster Cells .............. 79
M.W. Taylor, K.C. Gupta, and L. Zawistowich

Purine Catabolism in Isolated Hepatocytes:
Influence of Coformycin ....................... 85
G. Van den Berghe, F. Bontemps, and H.G. Hers

II. ENZYMEOLOGY AND PURINE METABOLISM

A. **Phosphoribosyltransferases**

Inactivation of Hypoxanthine Guanine Phosphoribosyltransferase by Guanosine Dialdehyde:
An Active Site Directed Inhibitor ............... 87
L.A. Johnson, R.B. Gordon, and B.T. Emmerson
CONTENTS OF PART B

Role of Human Hypoxanthine Guanine Phosphoribosyltransferase in Nucleotide Interconversion
A. Giacomello and C. Salerno

Purification and Characterization of Mammalian Adenine Phosphoribosyltransferase
M.W. Taylor and H.V. Hershey

The Effect of Phosphoribosylpyrophosphate on Stability and Configuration of Hypoxanthineguaninephosphoribosyltransferase and Adeninephosphoribosyltransferase from Human Erythrocytes
W. Gröbner and N. Zöllner

Chemical Modification of Hypoxanthine-phosphoribosyltransferase and Its Protection by Substrates and Products
W. Gutensohn and H. Jahn

B. Nucleoside Phosphoribosylating Enzymes

Structural Studies of Human Adenine Phosphoribosyltransferase Purified by Affinity Chromatography
J.A. Holden, G.S. Meredith, and W.N. Kelley

Phosphoribosylpyrophosphate (PRPP) Synthetase Mutant in Salmonella typhimurium
B. Jochimsen, B. Garber, and J.S. Gots

C. Nucleoside Cleaving Enzymes

Methylmercaptopurine Ribonucleoside Toxicity in Human Fibroblasts: Inhibition of Phosphoribosylpyrophosphate Synthetase as well as Amidophosphoribosyltransferase
R.C.K. Yen and M.A. Becker

Adenosine Kinase: Regulation by Substrates, Magnesium, and pH
R.L. Miller and D.L. Adamczyk

Adenosine and Deoxyadenosine Kinase from Rat Liver
N. Ogasawara, Y. Yamada, and H. Goto

D. Deaminating Enzymes

Radioimmunochemical Analysis of Human Erythrocyte Adenosine Deaminase
P.E. Daddona, M.A. Frohman, and W.N. Kelley
Adenosine Deaminase Conversion Proteins: A Potential Role
P.P. Trotta and M.E. Balis

Regulatory Properties of AMP Deaminase Isozymes
N. Ogasawara, H. Goto, and Y. Yamada

Human Adenosine Deaminase: Stoichiometry of the Large Form Complex
P.E. Daddona and W.N. Kelley

Guanase from Human Liver - Purification and Characterization
R. Kuzmits, H. Stemberger, and M.M. Müller

E. Oxidating Enzymes
Nicotinamide and Liver Xanthine Oxidase
A. Di Stefano, M. Pizzichini, and E. Marinello

Xanthine Oxidase Activity in Human Intestines. Histochemical and Radiochemical Study
C. Auscher, N. Amory, P. van der Kemp, and F. Delbarre

III. PYRIMIDINE METABOLISM

Purine and Pyrimidine Metabolism in Hereditary Oroticaciduria During a 15-Year Follow-Up Study
D.R. Webster, H.A. Simmonds, C.F. Potter, and D.M.O. Becroft

Effect of Allopurinol on Pyrimidine Metabolism in Human White Blood Cells: Role of the Salvage Pathway
P. Banholzer, W. Gröbner, and N. Zöllner

Kinetics and Compartmentation of Erythrocyte Pyrimidine Metabolism
E.H. Harley, P. Zetler, and S. Neál

Simultaneous Determination of Rates of Purine and Pyrimidine Synthesis in Cultured Human Lymphoblasts and Fibroblasts
W.H. Huisman, K.O. Raivio, and M.A. Becker

Activities of Enzymes of Purine and Pyrimidine Metabolism in Nine Mycoplasma Species
M. Hamet, C. Bonissol, and P. Cartier
CONTENTS OF PART B

IV. LYMPHOCYTE PURINE METABOLISM RESEARCH

Increases in Purine Excretion and Rate of Synthesis by Drugs Inhibiting IMP Dehydrogenase or Adenylosuccinate Synthetase Activities .......... 237
R.C. Willis and J.E. Seegmiller

Possible Role for 5'-Nucleotidase in Deoxyadenosine Selective Toxicity to Cultured Human Lymphoblasts .................. 243

Cyclic Nucleotide Levels and Mechanism of Inhibition of Leucocyte Function by Adenosine Deaminase Inhibition .................. 251
A.D. Meisel, Ch. Natarajan, G. Sterba, and H.S. Diamond

Purine Ribonucleoside and Deoxyribonucleoside Metabolism in Thymocytes .......... 259
F.F. Snyder and T. Lukey

Molecular Mechanism(s) of Deoxyribonucleoside in T-Lymphoblasts ............. 265
J.M. Wilson, B.S. Mitchell, and W.N. Kelley

Inhibition of Immune Cell Function by Adenosine: Biochemical Studies ........ 271
T.P. Zimmerman, G. Wolberg, G.S. Duncan, R.D. Deeprose, and R.J. Harvey

Interactions Between Energy Metabolism and Adenine Nucleotide Metabolism in Human Lymphoblasts .......... 277
S.S. Matsumoto, K.O. Raivio, R.C. Willis, and J.E. Seegmiller

Enzymes of Purine Interconversions in Subfractions of Lymphocytes ............. 283
J.P.R.M. van Laarhoven, G.Th. Spierenburg, C.H.M.M. De Bruyn, and E.D.A.M. Schretlen

Measurement of the Rates of Synthesis and Degradation of Hypoxanthine-guanine phosphoribosyltransferase in Human Lymphoblasts .......... 289
P. Moore Mattes and W.N. Kelley
Human 5'-Nucleotidase. Properties and Characterization of the Enzyme from Placenta. Lymphocytes and Lymphoblastoid Cells in Culture .......................... 295
W. Gutensohn

Metabolism and Toxicity of 9-Beta-D-Arabinofuranosyladenine in Human Malignant T Cells and B Cells in Tissue Culture .......................... 299
D.A. Carson, J. Kaye, and J.E. Seegmiller

V. IMMUNE SYSTEM AND PURINE METABOLISM

Suppression of Cellular Immunity Due to Inhibition of Purine Nucleoside Phosphorylase by Allopurinol-Riboside .......................... 309
Y. Nishida, N. Kamatani, K. Tanimoto, and I. Akaoka

Lymphocyte 5'-Nucleotidase Deficiency: Clinical and Metabolic Characteristics of the Associated Hypogammaglobulinemia ...................... 315
N.L. Edwards, J.T. Cassidy, and I.H. Fox

Immunological Studies on Lesch-Nyhan Patients .................. 321
C.H.M.M. de Bruyn, Ph. Gausset, J. Duchateau, E. Vamos, S. Kulakowski and G. Delespesse

Activity of Ecto-5'-Nucleotidase in Lymphoblastoid Cell Lines Derived from Carriers of Congenital X-Linked Agammaglobulinemia ............... 327
L.F. Thompson, G.R. Boss, A. Bianchino, and J.E. Seegmiller

VI. CANCER RESEARCH

Adenosine Deaminase and Purine Nucleoside Phosphorylase in Acute and Chronic Lymphatic Leukemia ........................................ 333
H. Ludwig, H. Winterleitner, R. Kuzmits, and M.M. Müller

Purine Salvage Enzymes in Lymphocytes and Granulocytes from Patients with Small-Cell Carcinoma of the Lung .......................... 339
P. Nygaard and J. Mejer
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Treatment of Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia with the Adenosine Deaminase Inhibitor 2'-Deoxycoformycin</td>
<td>347</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B.S. Mitchell, Ch.A. Koller, and W.N. Kelley</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase of Phosphoribosylpyrophosphate Levels in Cultured L1210 Leukemia Cells Exposed to Methotrexate</td>
<td>351</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J.M. Buesa, A. Leyva, and H.M. Pinedo</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purine Salvage Pathway in Leukemic Cells</td>
<td>357</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Goday, M.R. Grau, I. Jadraque, and M.P. Rivera</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biochemical Consequences of Treatment with the Adenosine Deaminase Inhibitor 2'-Deoxycoformycin</td>
<td>365</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R.M. Paine, J.F. Smyth, and K.R. Harrap</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In vitro and in vivo Effect of Deoxycoformycin in Human T Cell Leukemia</td>
<td>373</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.L. Yu, F.H. Kung, B. Bakay, and W.L. Nyhan</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uniqueness of Deoxyribonucleotide Metabolism in Human Malignant T Cell Lines</td>
<td>381</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D.A. Carson, J. Kaye, S. Matsumoto, J.E. Seegmiller, and L. Thompson</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VII. METHODOLOGY</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Performance Liquid Chromatography of Plasma Pyrimidines and Purines and Its Application in Cancer Chemotherapy</td>
<td>389</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Leyva, J. Schornagel, and H.M. Pinedo</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urate-Binding Proteins in Plasma Studied by Affinity Chromatography</td>
<td>395</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M.L. Ciompi, A. Lucacchini, D. Segnini, and M.R. Mazzoni</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chromatographic Determination of PRPP-Synthetase Activity in Human Blood Cells</td>
<td>401</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P. Nygaard and K.F. Jensen</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purification of Myocardial Adenosine Kinase Using Affinity and Ion-Exchange Chromatography</td>
<td>409</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M.P. Uitendaal, J.W. De Jong, E. Harmsen, and E. Keijzer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CONTENTS OF PART B

Micromethods for the Measurement of Purine Enzymes in Lymphocytes .......................... 415
J.P.R.M. van Laarhoven, G.Th. Spierenburg,
F.T.J.J. Oerlemans, and C.H.M.M. De Bruyn

A Rapid Screening Method for Inborn Errors of Purine and Pyrimidine Metabolism Using Isotachophoresis ............................ 421
H.A. Simmonds, A. Sahota, and R. Payne

Analysis of Serum Purines and Pyrimidines by Isotachophoresis ............................. 429
F. Oerlemans, Th. Verheggen, F. Mikkers,
F. Everaerts, and C.H.M.M. De Bruyn

Determination of Uric Acid in Serum: Comparison of a Standard Enzymatic Method and Isotachophoresis .......................... 435
F. Oerlemans, Th. Verheggen, F. Mikkers,
F. Everaerts, and C.H.M.M. De Bruyn

Addition Products of Uric Acid and Formaldehyde ............ 441
P.A. Simkin and Q.P. Lee

Automated Retrieval of Purine Literature .................. 445
L. Ferreiro and A. Rey

Author Index ........................................... 449

Subject Index ......................................... 453