

BOOK REVIEWS

THE CARE AND FEEDING OF YOUR DIABETIC CHILD, *Sally Vanderpool*. \$4.95, 116 pages, New York, Frederick Fell, Inc., 1968.

Mrs. Vanderpool has undertaken a most difficult task in attempting to offer various "hints" to the parents of diabetic children. Some of these hints are very general and will be useful to many families, but, all too often, they are too specific to be broadly applicable. She relates an interesting account of her day-to-day experiences with her diabetic son. Unfortunately, the book is also unique since any other parent, writing on the same subject, would have entirely different experiences and *each* would be unique. There may be a "sameness" about diabetes, but there is little uniformity among children and these individual variations will make each family's experiences different from each other.

Throughout the book, there are fairly significant discrepancies in the philosophy which Mrs. Vanderpool tries to impart. She speaks of the necessity of "treating the situation (the privilege of carrying extra carbohydrate) with the highest honor" and yet writes later of how it is possible to "bend still another school regulation." This inconsistency of philosophy may be very difficult for most children to understand. After reviewing the book on several occasions, I found myself wondering whether Phil was a "normal diabetic child" or a "normal child with diabetes" and there is a great difference. The parent of one of my patients was even distressed at the title—suggesting a book that might have been written by a zoologist.

Mrs. Vanderpool occasionally makes statements which are medically only "half-truths" and these may be extremely misleading to the diabetic family. A typical example is her true statement that "illness itself increases the likelihood of acidosis" which is immediately followed by the statement "making exercise even more important." The implication is that a sick child should be "exercised"—whether or not he feels well enough to do so. Does it not make more sense to administer insulin during such periods of stress?

This book should only be recommended to the diabetic family who has been previously "educated" and who has the intellectual capacity to accept those aspects which apply to their family situation and to reject those which do not. Despite its many good points, it should not be recommended to the family with a recently diagnosed child with diabetes.

DIETETIC FOODS, *A. E. Bender, Ph.D.*, \$13.50, 286 pages, 26 figures, 54 tables, 8 black and white plates, New York, Chemical Publishing, 1968.

This is a well-written book which surveys the science of nutrition focusing on the preparation and rationale behind the use of dietetic foods.

The first two chapters present an excellent overview of the principles of nutrition, nutritional requirements, dietary deficiencies and excesses, diet therapy and dietetic foods. Subsequent chapters include reviews of energy balance, and fat, protein and mineral metabolism. The vitamins and their deficiency diseases are described. The last chapter describes nutritional losses during processing and storage of food.

An outstanding feature of this book is its knowledgeable discussion of the composition of a wide array of special dietetic foods. The need for such foods is carefully explained. Methods of manufacture are described, and sensible guidelines for their use are given. Dietetic foods are discussed in relationship to inborn errors of metabolism, diabetes, low sodium regimens, infant feeding, weight reduction, protein supplementation, vitamin and mineral enrichment.

This small volume is, however, a supplement to, rather than a substitute for, standard treatises on nutrition. In several areas, diet therapy is given only brief treatment. Diabetes is covered in seven pages, three of which consist of a superficial review of the biochemistry and prevalence of the disease. Dietetic foods and a salad dressing for diabetics are described, but there is no discussion of diabetic diets or the Exchange system.

Similarly, diets for the prevention of atherosclerosis are discussed in five pages. Furthermore, the author seems to ascribe the cholesterol lowering effect of certain fats to their essential fatty acid content, a concept which has proved to be inaccurate. He also states that the incidence of coronary heart disease is more directly related to sugar intake than fat ingestion, an hypothesis which is yet unproven. The discussion of low sodium diets is more complete.

In addition, some may find it disconcerting to find reference to British products not available in the United States and, at other times, reference to commercial products by their patent numbers without mention of trade names.

In summary, this book can be recommended as an informative and accurate survey of nutritional science which particularly excels in its discussion of dietetic foods.