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Reply

Sir,—I agree that the possible adverse effects of this drug must be carefully weighed against the potential benefits and moreover that the efficacy of the drug requires a full critical evaluation.

However until this evidence is forthcoming I consider that methylprednisolone does have a role in the treatment of certain cases of temporal arteritis.

While methylprednisolone is a commonly used drug the number of serious side effects reported is low. Conversely there is a significant morbidity and mortality consequent upon bilateral visual loss in the elderly.

Thus I consider use of methylprednisolone is justified when blindness is threatened, for example, in patients who develop second-eye symptoms when already taking a significant dose of oral prednisolone or for patients who delay presentation until after the second eye has failed.

Total blindness is a catastrophic complication of temporal arteritis. The potential prevention of this outcome would seem to justify utilisation of a relatively safe if unproved therapy.

J P DIAMOND
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Linen Meadlin Street,
Bristol BS1 2LX


This book is dedicated to the use of sodium hyaluronate in all aspects of intraocular visco-surgery. It is edited by a team of well known American and Italian ophthalmologists, and the manufacturers of the product appear to have played a prominent part in the production of the book.

The text is relatively short but clear. The introductory section deals with the chemistry, physics, and physiological properties of sodium hyaluronate. This is followed by four chapters about the clinical applications of this undoubtedly useful substance. Having discussed its use in surgery of the anterior segment and glaucoma, the editors devote the largest section of the text (and the largest volumes of sodium hyaluronate) to surgery of the posterior segment. There are many colour paintings which make the procedures look deceptively simple and free of complications.

All in all this is a beautifully illustrated book which is easy to read, but unless there is a sudden change in the price of sodium hyaluronate it is likely to be limited value to most readers in Britain.

Z GREGOR


I was particularly delighted to review this book because when I was in the early stages of converting to phacoemulsification for the management of cataract patients this was a book I purchased and consumed both with pleasure and benefit. It is a slim volume designed specifically to encourage and assist the surgeon undergoing the process of converting to phacoemulsification. This process can be uncomfortable and painful from time to time and encouragement and assistance are both very welcome. The author’s style is distinctly chatty but is always very much to the point.

In its 12 short chapters it covers every aspect of the procedure and the important points are illustrated by simple line drawings. No important technical point is omitted. I should, however, point out that in my experience no textbook can replace the value of an instruct-