Response to Dr Ryan's Letter

We are pleased to get this opportunity to reply to the comments of Dr Ryan. The following questions are raised: 1) Do inflammatory mediators influence subcutaneous adipose tissue blood flow (SBF) via lymphatic drainage from the skin to the adipose tissue? An example concerning adrenaline is presented. 2) Do fatty tissue around hair follicles influence 133 xenon washout?

1) The blanching observed along the lymphatic vessels does not necessarily indicate decreased dermal blood flow and is certainly not evidence for decreased SBF. In several situations, pale skin does not reflect diminished skin blood flow, e.g., in corticosteroid-treated skin and in the Wronoff ring (1, 2). Communications between the blood and lymphatic system have previously been discussed by Dr Ryan (3). Drainage from venous vessels to the lymphatics has been described, but the reverse flow direction has not been reported. Additionally, the lymphatic vessels transport fluid proximally, not vertically into the depth of the tissues. Consequently, it is most likely that any vasoactive metabolite contained in the lymph will have no influence on SBF.

2) Experiment using autoradiography on frozen tissue and dissections of cutaneous tissue from cutaneous tissue, in the frozen state, suggested that following one hour after labelling the 133 xenon was cleared from the skin (4). Secondly, monoeponential washout from selected cutaneous tissue arrangements, implied washout from homogenously perfused tissue compartments (1, 4). Consequently, a "sink" caused by fatty tissue around hair-follicles constitutes no pitfall.

REFERENCES


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An Accidental Tattoo

Sir,

Generally speaking, tattoos are divided into two groups - decorative tattoos performed by professional tattooists, and accidental tattoos which arise from pigmented particles accidentally introduced as contaminants of wounds or by penetrating previously intact skin. However, rarely accidental tattoos are figurative and therefore it was considered of interest to report a case with a remarkable personal history.

A 42-year-old man presented with a tattoo on the medial aspect of his left thigh (Fig. 1). He was employed as a livestock transporter by a company for the collecting of pigs. He visited several farms every day with his lorry and at the end of the day he brought the pigs to the slaughterhouse. In order to

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Fig. 1.
separate the pigs they were tattooed on the right gluteal region with numbers. The tattoo was made with a special instrument, using Indian ink. Unfortunately one of the pigs escaped during the procedure, resulting in a tattoo on the man's left thigh. For three years he was frequently questioned about his tattoo and on telling the story it only gave rise to laughter. He tired of the annoying questions and requested dermatological help. The tattoo was excised and the patient was relieved of his problem.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

Environmental Threat to the Skin. An International Symposium will be held at University of Wales College of Medicine, April 15–17, 1991. The meeting will consist of invited papers, free communications, a poster session and exhibits on the effects of environmental hazards on the skin, their prevention and treatment. For further information please contact: Professor Ronald Marks, University of Wales College of Medicine, Heath Park, Cardiff, CF4 4XN.

The Third International Course on Occupational Dermatoses will be organized 3–7 June, 1991 in Mariehamn, Åland, Finland. For further information please contact Lasse Kanerva, MD, Tel: (+358(0) 4747288, Telefax (+358(0) 4130691.

The 6th International Congress of Pediatric Dermatology will be held in Toronto, Canada, on June 8–11, 1992. For further information please contact Susan B. Mallory, Pediatric Dermatology, University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences, 800 Marshall St., Little Rock, AR.

In the December issues of J Am Acad Dermatol, Arch Dermatol and Int J Dermatol editorials were published on "Dual publication and manipulation of the editorial process". As editor of Acta Dermato-Venereologica I would like to support this project. Instances of dual publication unethical manipulation will in the future be reviewed at meetings of the Council of Dermatology Editors. Lennart Juutil.

BOOKS RECEIVED


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