

months of the study; hence, we were not as cautious with the use of prophylactic antacids or other measures as we otherwise might have been. Early in the series we carefully checked stools for blood with no positive results. It should be emphasized that this study was conducted completely with the use of a now obsolete compressed tablet which was subsequently shown to have a variable dissolution rate and erratic absorption.^{2,5,10} When a new formulation of indomethacin was used, and a smaller daily dose employed, the incidence of toxic and adverse effects was said to have been reduced.⁹

The discovery of a new type of antirheumatic agent is notable. However, indomethacin is by no means the ideal agent because of the large number of patients who do not respond favorably and because of large number of adverse effects which it induces. It is hoped that related substances may prove to be effective antirheumatic agents and free of serious adverse effects.

SUMMARY

Indomethacin, a new nonsteroidal compound, was tested in 97 patients. Results were excellent in 6, good in 23, and fair in 12. The drug was discontinued in 50 patients, and 6 others were lost to followup. The most common reason for discontinuation of the drug was gastrointestinal side effects, which includes 6 cases of peptic ulcer. Although the ratio of adverse to beneficial effects is high, the significant and symptomatic relief which many rheumatoid and other rheumatic patients experience suggests the possibility that a related drug may be found with a more acceptable therapeutic ratio than that of indomethacin.

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THE COLUMBUS MEDICAL CENTER,
Columbus, Ohio, June 12, 1963.

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DEAR DR. CANTWELL: Our interest in the therapeutic effects of Indomethacin has been centered largely on Rheumatoid Arthritis, both peripheral and spinal. In reviewing and analyzing our data, I have come to the conclusion that 61 patients have had sufficient trial to be included in our study. Of these, 49 were of the peripheral and 12 of the spinal variety. A good (decisively beneficial) effect was