concentrations of aerobes in premenstrual specimens compared with those in the specimens collected in the week following onset of menses. Analysis of sequential specimens from each of the five individuals showed considerable variation in species recovered. These data indicate that the vaginal flora in healthy adult women is a dynamic ecosystem in which anaerobes are usually the numerically dominant bacteria.

Authors' summary

The condom and gonorrhoea

D. BARLOW (1977). *Lancet*, 2, 811-812

The use of the condom by male patients attending a clinic specialising in sexually transmitted diseases has been assessed

over a period of six months. Condom users were divided into those who used them properly and invariably, and those who did not. In the group studied, correct use of the condom was associated with a significantly lower probability of acquiring gonorrhoea ($P < 0.001$) and a significantly higher chance of there being no sexually transmitted disease diagnosed ($P < 0.0005$). The diagnosis rate of non-specific urethritis, however, did not differ among the groups.

Author's summary

Inhibition of *Corynebacterium vaginale* by metronidazole

R. F. SMITH AND W. E. DUNKELBERG (1977). *Sexually Transmitted Diseases*, 4, 20-21

Tellurite reduction test to aid in the recognition of *Corynebacterium vaginale*
R. F. SMITH, J. L. VOSS, AND R. K. BAILEY (1977). *Journal of Clinical Microbiology*, 5, 375-380

The expanding spectrum of Behçet's syndrome

E. KANSU, S. DEGLIN, R. I. CANTOR, J. F. BURKE, S. Y. CHO, AND R. T. CATHART (1977). *Sexually Transmitted Diseases*, 237, 1855-1856

Treatment of balanitis xerotica obliterans with testosterone propionate ointment

T. A. H. PASIECZNY (1977). *Acta dermato-venereologica*, 57, 275

Book review

Burckhardt's Atlas and Manual of Dermatology and Venereology. Third American Edition. Edited by P. J. Lynch and S. Epstein. 1977. Pp. 271, 178 figures (including 111 in colour). Williams and Wilkins, Baltimore, USA (£26.00)

The first half of this book gives a brief account of the various skin diseases, including their treatment. Venereal diseases are devoted to a chapter of eight pages and other diseases of the genitalia three pages. The preface states 'this was to be a short and simple, but nevertheless

inclusive, introduction to dermatology and venereology for those who are not dermatologists'. This certainly does not apply to venereology. There are a total of six illustrations of genital lesions. Among the 18 illustrations of syphilitic lesions there are two rather similar ones of secondary palmar syphilides and one showing bismuth lines of the gums, surely now of only historical interest. The space would have been better used to provide a clinical illustration of scabies. In 1977 one might have expected an illustration of the skin lesions of gonococcal septicaemia.

The only figure relating to gonorrhoea is one showing Gram-negative diplococci in black and white! There are some misleading statements—for example, that Hutchinson's teeth are 'notched central incisors'. The index gives page references to the figures but the pages of the section containing the figures are not numbered!

Anyone wanting an introduction to venereology will be disappointed and will certainly not want to pay £26.00 for this book.

P. Rodin

Notice

Dr R. D. Catterall has been appointed Adviser in Genitourinary Medicine to the Chief Medical Officer of the Department of Health and Social Security from 1 January 1978. He succeeds Dr C. S. Nicol who has retired.