Incidence of dental caries in coeliac children

Sir,
Referring to the letter on this subject (Archives, 1979, 54, 166), we have submitted a paper entitled 'Gastroenteritis, coeliac disease, and enamel hypoplasia' to the British Dental Journal. One of the problems in such a study was the difficulty in obtaining, for histological section, teeth with enamel hypoplasia. The hypoplastic lesions are often destroyed by dental caries. We were lucky to obtain specimen teeth, in spite of the fact that we have been observing coeliac children for 20 years.

The lesions that were on the permanent incisors and on the first permanent molars were produced at the end of the first year of life. It is possible to detect the lesions before the teeth erupt by means of X-rays. This allows appropriate preventive or therapeutic measures to be instituted as soon as the tooth erupts.

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Fucidic acid in Gunn rats. No influence on serum bilirubin concentration

Sir,
When drugs which compete with bilirubin for albumin-binding sites are injected into homozygous Gunn rats there is a decline in the level of serum bilirubin. After long-acting sulphonamides, for instance, serum bilirubin decreases to between 10 and 20% of the baseline concentration (Ballowitz and Hanefeld, 1976). The displaced, now unbound (free), bilirubin moves out of the plasma mainly into adipose tissues, including the brain, where it may lead to kernicterus. This was first described for sulphisoxazole (Gastrisin) by Johnson et al. (1959).

During the last decade several other drugs that are commonly used in nurseries have been subjected to appropriate tests (Brodersen, 1974; Yearly and Davis, 1974; Rayner et al., 1978). Fucidic acid was not among them, as this substance is not often prescribed during the first days of life. However, we recently had to infuse this antibiotic into a newborn baby suffering from severe staphylococcal sepsis and osteomyelitis, the staphylococci being resistant to most other antibiotics.

We therefore tested IV 'fucidin soluble' ampoules (Thomae GmbH Biberach a.d. Riss, Germany) in 3- to 5-day-old homozygous, jaundiced Gunn rats. We also

Mr Fulstow comments:
I should like to thank Mr Miller and Mr Smith for their comments and I look forward to reading their paper in the British Dental Journal.

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