

Journal's explicit commitment to maintain statistical standards will stimulate closer collaboration between general practitioners and statisticians, to the benefit of both disciplines.

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References

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- Hill, A. B. (1937). *Principles of Medical Statistics*. London: *The Lancet*.
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Recognizing the unusual

NO matter how much childish pleasure we take from relating our successes, there is no doubt that most of us learn more from our failures; hearing about other people's failures probably appeals to an unworthy sense of superiority at the same time as pointing up the lesson. We therefore draw the reader's attention to Dr Campion's account of a case of epiglottitis on pages 350-351. All the ingredients of failure are there—a pattern of established recurrent illness (in this case croup), and a home visit at the bleary, cortisol-depleted hour of 04.00.

Fortunately, Dr Campion arranged to revisit before, rather than after, his morning surgery, and before the septicaemia and toxicity of this horrid disease had carried off the child. But he might not have been so lucky, and we are the beneficiaries of his experience. We invite our readers to join Dr Campion: a common symptom or sign and an unusual cause that at least in the beginning eluded the doctor. Boasting and self-congratulation will be much less acceptable than an honest admission of failure.



and gout. Changes in serum potassium are minor and probably clinically unimportant in uncomplicated hypertension. Care should be taken in patients taking digitalis, and those liable to hypokalaemia from other causes when occasional measurement of potassium levels is appropriate. In diabetics chlorthalidone may decrease glucose tolerance. Withdrawal of clonidine. Side-effects: Cold extremities and muscular fatigue. Sleep disturbance rarely seen. Rash and dry eyes have been reported with beta-blockers—consider discontinuance if they occur. Cessation of beta-blocker or beta-blocker/diuretic combination should be gradual. With chlorthalidone occasional nausea and dizziness and, rarely, idiosyncratic

drug reactions such as leucopenia, neutropenia and leucopenia. Parotitis and Bence Jones protein. "Retard" 50 is a registered trademark. "Retard" 50 is a trademark.

Full prescribing information is available on request to the company.



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