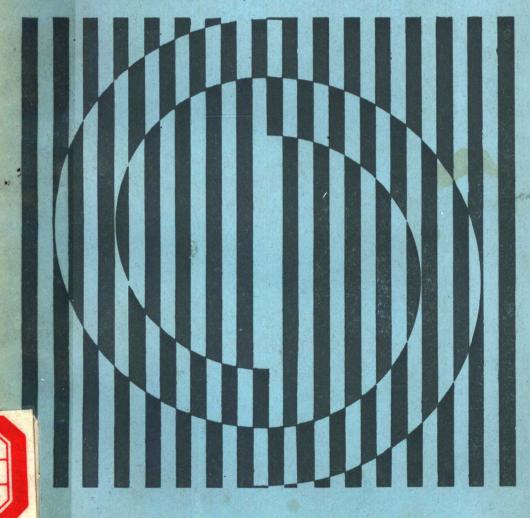
Septic Shock in Man

Edited by S. G. Hershey, M.D., Louis R. M. Del Guercio, M.D., and Rita McConn, Ph.D.



Septic Shock in Man

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destructive of human life.

The drawing on the title page is a stylized rendition of the familiar figure of Siva, the Hindu god of destruction. Siva secmed an appropriate symbol for a conference dealing with shock, a force

Foreword

A BIT OF HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

on the contents of this book, the proceedings of the Conference on the Dynamics of Septic Shock in Man, is in order. In 1960 at a meeting of several committees of the National Research Council including the Committee on Shock, the status of shock research in man was critically examined and found to be disappointingly meager. The committees therefore endorsed the idea that greater effort should be directed toward the study of shock in man.

In 1962 a group of perhaps twenty investigators attended a small workshop-type conference at the National Academy of Sciences which we now refer to as the First Conference on Septic Shock. They met to describe their experiences and exchange ideas on septic shock, at that time already generally considered to be the most puzzling and lethal type of shock syndrome. Considering that the mortality associated with human septic shock was by best estimates in the range of 70 to 85%, the consensus was that insufficient research was being conducted in this area.

Two years later, in 1964, a second conference-workshop on septic shock, again relatively small but ambitiously conceived, was held at the Academy under the auspices of the Committee on Shock. This conference, designed to communicate what progress was being made in the study of septic shock in man, essentially revealed that most of the work was still being done in animals and centered about the consequences of injecting endotoxin. The opinion was expressed by a number of investigators that the dearth of good research data in man was probably due to a lack of know-how and of practical equipment for translating animal laboratory research techniques, particu-

larly cardiovascular-respiratory measurements, to the bedside, the operating room, and to specially organized intensive care units.

Fortunately, since this second conference techniques have been improvised and instrumentation developed at a gratifying pace. Well-conceived and reliable methods for obtaining measurements in man are accumulating. It became apparent to us a few years ago that the time would soon be ripe for another conference, this one to be the long-needed productive presentation and analysis of meaningful information on septic shock in man. The work being done in the Acute Clinical Research Center at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine was among the finest in the nation, and studies in septic shock were progressing particularly well. The Committee on Shock therefore requested the Einstein group to take the lead in bringing together investigators from across the nation. The resulting conference, organized with notable competence and expertise, fulfilled its mission and achieved our most optimistic expectations.

This book, which is based on the conference proceedings, draws together virtually all the existing worthwhile information on the subject in a well-organized format and bears eloquent testimony to the success of the conference. We were distinctly privileged to have participated in the conference, and it is a pleasure to express our admiration and gratitude to Drs. Hershey, Del Guercio, and McConn for undertaking to organize the meeting and for allowing us to include our remarks in this superb volume.

JOHN M. HOWARD
SAM F. SEELEY

Washington, D.C.

Preface

THE CONFERENCE on the Dynamics of Septic Shock in Man, sponsored by Albert Einstein College of Medicine of Yeshiva University in collaboration with the Committee on Shock of the Division of Medical Sciences, National Academy of Sciences-National Research Council, was held November 13–15, 1968, at Albert Einstein College of Medicine in New York.

The purpose of this conference was to bring together as many persons as was practical from the United States and Canada who were doing meaningful, well-documented studies on patients in septic shock. It was hoped that gathering these investigators under one roof at one time would not only provide a forum for presenting the essence of most of the worthwhile recent work in this area, but would also evoke a vigorous and critical interchange of information. We thought that if we could rock the boat in terms of how specific our knowledge of the nature of septic shock really is, the result would be, in some measure, to help identify and separate from this poorly communicated and poorly assessed body of data those theoretical concepts and that clinical therapy of most merit and promise. These proceedings might also provide the impetus for new and imaginative research to the end that the prevailing therapeutic empiricism would be reduced, perhaps resulting in a lowering of the disproportionately high mortality of septic shock. In general, the pathogenesis of the various shock syndromes is poorly understood. Their dynamics, however, except for septic shock, have been sufficiently elucidated so that prompt, aggressive therapy can successfully resuscitate most shock victims. In the case of septic shock, however, not only is the pathogenesis even more puzzling, but its pathophysiology also remains frustratingly muddled and controversial; for the most part, its victims cannot be success-

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fully treated by any means presently available. Appreciation of the interrelationships between sepsis and shock in man has been limited by two factors in particular: (1) analogies between experimental models in animals and the septic shock syndromes seen in man are questionable and speculative, and (2) clinical measurements in human beings have been confused by such uncontrollable factors as preexisting disease, lack of base-line reference data, and loss of continuity in measurement when it is interrupted by emergency procedures and desperate therapeutic measures. Nevertheless, some important areas of clinical physiological interest have yielded to experimental observation in man and have been intensively studied during the past few years. This new information provided the substance on which the conference was built and, we trust, made it possible to achieve some of our objective.

Our aim in converting the conference proceedings into a printed symposium was to make the content available in its original intent and purpose to a broader audience than the limited number of persons who were able to attend. To transpose the spoken into the written word without losing sight of this purpose, the recorded proceedings have been updated by each of the participants and significantly edited. We hope that we have accomplished our mission and effectively translated "the message" into "the medium."

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