BOOK REVIEW


Preimplantation genetic diagnosis (PGD) was first carried out at the Hammersmith Hospital in London by Robert Winston and Alan Handside, who developed a way of determining the sex of the human embryo before implantation, thereby reducing the risk of X linked disease. PGD is yet another approach to chromosome analysis by FISH and single cell DNA analysis for the detection of genetic defects before the embryo implants. Step by step instructions are given for making the necessary tools for polar body removal, although only one centre besides their own uses polar bodies for PGD. Similarly, the following chapter on nuclear transfer techniques for visualisation of chromosomes in polar bodies and blastomeres describes esoteric technology that is not carried out in any other centre and is of limited clinical use, although it has many research applications. There follow the two chapters that cover the Chicago group’s approaches to chromosome analysis by FISH and single cell DNA analysis for the detection of dominant and recessive disorders. The atlas is described as “An illustrated textbook and reference for clinicians”. It will best fulfil that role, since it is of limited use to either the embryologist or geneticist already working in the growing field of PGD. It will enable the clinician to understand better the complexity of the task facing the laboratory professionals when a patient is referred for genetic diagnosis before the embryo implants.

JOY DELHANTY

NOTICE

British Human Genetics Conference

The British Human Genetics Conference will be held at the University of York, England, on 10-12 September 2001. There will be sessions on: Quality in the process of genetic counselling; Functional significance of SNP’s role in common disease and pharmacogenetics; Audit in genetics; Chromosome structure and function; Rb molecular and cellular biology; Eye genetics; Complex disorders; Neurodegeneration; and The Carter Lecture by Professor Nick Hastie.

CORRECTION

In the August 2000 issue of the journal, in the electronic letter x10 “Duplication of medial 15q confirmed by FISH” by Browne et al the name of one of the authors, A Protopapas, was regrettably misspelt.