

Refining the Blood Labs

review by John (Keoni) Teta, MS, ND and Jade Teta (ND candidate 2004)

Blood Chemistry and CBC Analysis, Clinical Laboratory Testing from a Functional Perspective

by Dicken Weatherby, ND and Scott Ferguson, ND

Vis Medicatrix Press; Jacksonville, Oregon USA; 888-378-3224; www.Health-Alliances.com,
Softcover; \$65.00; 295 pages, ISBN 0-9726469-0-6

In a time when alternative medicine ideas and practices are enjoying wider application and success, we are faced with a dilemma. How do we incorporate our desire for prevention, individualized treatment, optimal health, and the quest for true cause of disease into current diagnostic practices which are not compatible with this new paradigm? Blood chemistry is currently used to assess patients based on population averages and overt disease. How can healthcare providers use the information in current blood laboratory analysis to establish a more refined assessment of health? Naturopathic Drs. Dicken Weatherby and Scott Ferguson have answered this question in their book, *Blood Chemistry and CBC Analysis, Clinical Laboratory Testing from a Functional Perspective*.

This new textbook has begun the evolution of blood laboratory testing from a disease-oriented reductionist practice to a holistically-minded model based on optimal physiological function. Drs. Weatherby and Ferguson utilize currently understood applications for blood labs in a way that allows the reader to see new patterns and applications for tests that will expand diagnostic assessments and broaden approaches to treatment. The practitioner will learn to

assess more than mere tissue damage and pathology, expanding their understanding of blood labs to include in-depth analysis of nutritional needs, preventative interventions, and directed functional approaches to different organ systems and tissues.

Each section of the book begins by explaining the lab value in question and giving background information on what that blood marker represents. A discussion section then continues with a review of the physiological underpinnings of the test. Ideal, optimal and alarm ranges for the marker are then defined. This section is perhaps the most valuable area of the book, as it addresses optimal ranges rather than those based on population averages that may or may not be applicable to the individual being tested. The lab marker is further defined in the context of when to order a specific test and what its clinical implications may be. An easy to use system of icons alerts the reader to the clinical considerations being reviewed. Interfering factors are discussed for each test along with related tests that put the marker into a holistic context.

In addition to a systematic format that will find a grateful audience among practitioners of unconventional medicine, this textbook offers more. There are numerous special topics ranging from metabolic syndrome to intestinal

parasites and lab value changes associated with pregnancy. Another gem of this book is a very useful appendix, including a section on patterns that exist between multiple tests. This section gives the practitioner quick access to overlapping lab tests, allowing them to rule out potential diagnoses.

As useful as this book is, there are a few drawbacks. One drawback is that the pattern section is laid out so that practitioners must have suspected conditions in mind. Looking up commonly overlapping lab tests in a way that points the user to a diagnosis in addition to the reverse, would be helpful. Also, several clinical conditions are addressed that are commonly discussed in the naturopathic community but not well understood in medicine as a whole. For example, many lab values indicate "adrenal hypofunction." Further explanation of the stages of maladaptive stress syndrome and a more complete definition of these functional terms in the text are warranted. Also, while sources are referred to in general terms, specific references are scant in large part because of the lack of primary research in this new area. Hopefully, future editions will address these issues.

Drs. Weatherby and Ferguson have begun to fill a gap in the practice of unconventional medicine, as well as conventional medicine. The practitioner of natural medicine now has access to a laboratory reference manual more in line with his/her practice. Expanding the interpretation of blood chemistry, this book allows the generation of clinically relevant information even in the absence of overt pathological profiles. This well-done and user-friendly reference manual should be considered the preferred textbook and reference manual of holistically-oriented blood chemistry analysis.

Blood Chemistry and CBC Analysis- Clinical laboratory testing from a Functional perspective

Dicken Weatherby, N.D. and Scott Ferguson, N.D.

Blood Chemistry and CBC Analysis

Clinical Laboratory Testing
from a Functional Perspective



Dicken Weatherby, N.D.
Scott Ferguson, N.D.

"Integrating this method of blood chemistry analysis will help identify nutritional and metabolic deficiencies as well as potential organ dysfunction in patients considered "normal" based on conventional laboratory reference ranges".

Douglas MacKay, N.D., *Altern. Med.*
Rev.:2003;8(3):343

"I would highly recommend this book to practitioners in traditional medicine venturing into the complimentary field of medicine"
Dr. Khush Mark, *Positive Health- Issue*
92, September 2003 published in UK

- In-depth coverage of 52 blood tests with optimal and functional values
- 62 patterns for common functional disorders
- Organized in both US ranges and Standard International Units
- 36 special topics and in-office tests

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For more details on this and other books by Drs. Ferguson and Weatherby please visit www.Health-Alliances.com

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