

Introduction

Delivering the benefits of anti-emetic innovation

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These proceedings discuss a most important factor in modern medicine; the economic impact of the introduction of a new procedure. In some areas of medicine the importance of new discoveries is such that cost considerations are minimal. However, this is not true of many present advances, which may represent important technical novelties, yet have little ultimate impact on the health of a whole population, while increasing the budgets of the health care system considerably. Readers of this supplement of *Anti-Cancer Drugs* will rapidly realize that, beyond anti-emetics, the center of interest of the Symposium at which these papers were presented, the discussions can be applied to many other fields of medicine. In an environment where money is limited, one has to conduct very careful analyses of old as well as new procedures.

If the approaches which are found in this volume are used widely, many presently accepted procedures would possibly be modified. Many centers have already gone into this type of analysis, and realized that even apparently low-cost examinations can, when improperly used in many patients, lead to enormous costs. As an example, in a field where 5-HT₃ receptor antagonist anti-emetics will be introduced very soon, one may think of the many useless pre-operative examinations ordered for otherwise healthy patients. Anesthetists have understood this, and recommendations have been issued, although they are not well known and often followed poorly. We hope that the impact of this volume will go beyond anti-emetics and be felt as a contribution to patient-orientated cost-containment measures.