

Indeterminate Leprosy

TO THE EDITOR:

I wonder why Dr. Browne in his letter (1) on indeterminate leprosy in cases of doubt accepts the advice of Dr. Pettit "to temporize" and "to await indubitable signs of leprosy," without first referring to other means of diagnosing indeterminate leprosy. To my experience each lesion suspected of being indeterminate leprosy should be examined by sweat testing rather than by histopathology or sensory tests. The absence of sweating, visualized by 5% o-phthalaldehyde in xylene (2) provides convincing evidence of indeterminate leprosy. This test

is easier to carry out than pilocarpine injections with iodine and starch as the indicator.

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REFERENCES

1. BROWNE, S. G. Indeterminate leprosy, a valid clinical concept. *Int. J. Lepr.* **50** (1980) 221–223.
2. JUHLIN, L. and SHELLEY, W. B. A stain for sweat-pores. *Nature* **213** (1967) 408.