

**EFFECT OF ADMINISTRATION OF RIFAMPICIN ON THE ADRENOCORTICAL FUNCTION IN PATIENTS WITH PULMONARY TUBERCULOSIS**

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The ACTH (synacthen) stimulation test was performed on admission and after 4 weeks of treatment in 17 pulmonary tuberculosis patients receiving daily Rifampicin regimen (R-7), 22 patients on a twice-weekly Rifampicin regimen (R-2) and 19 patients on a daily non Rifampicin regimen (NR-7). A positive response to synacthen was observed in 8 R-7, 16 R-2 and 8 NR-7 patients on admission and in 7, 15 and 15 patients respectively at 4 weeks. The increase in the proportion of positive responders among the NR-7 patients was significant ( $P = 0.02$ ). Three

R-7 and 2 R-2 patients who were positive responders to synacthen on admission became negative responders at 4 weeks, a phenomenon not observed in the NR-7 patients. These findings suggest that Rifampicin probably exerts a deleterious effect on the adrenocortical function.

The diurnal rhythm of cortisol secretion (based on salivary levels), which was abnormal on admission, returned to a normal pattern by the end of 2 months of treatment in all the three groups.