

BOOK REVIEW

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A Review of Principles and Applications of Medicolegal Alcohol Determination

REFERENCE: Widmark, E. M. P., *Principles and Applications of Medicolegal Alcohol Determination*, Biomedical Publications, Davis, CA, 1981, 163 pp.

This book is a translation of the original German monograph by Widmark published in 1932. The book covers three aspects of ethanol: (1) determination of ethanol, (2) distribution and pharmacokinetics, and (3) case histories.

The book is of historical value only. The methods described for ethanol determination are no longer in use in present day toxicology laboratories. Even though the methods have changed over the last 50 years, one has to question whether they have improved. The reader will note that the precision the author was able to attain is better than some toxicology laboratories can achieve today with sophisticated instruments.

The distribution and pharmacokinetic part of the book describes the elimination rate constants and distribution of alcohol. All of those principles have been reviewed many times over the past 50 years. The pharmacokinetic principles are presented in such a way that they are easy to understand and follow. In addition to ethanol distribution and pharmacokinetics, the book covers the pharmacokinetics of acetone.

Most of the information is still applicable today even though this book was written 50 years ago. The reader most likely has encountered most if not all the information in many review articles.

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