ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I wish to express my heartfelt gratitude to Dr. K. Balasubramanian, Ph.D., Lecturer, Department of Endocrinology, Dr. A.L.M. Post Graduate Institute of Basic Medical Sciences, University of Madras, Madras-600 113, for his valuable guidance, encouragement and patience throughout the course of this study.

I would like to thank Prof. P. Govindarajulu, Ph.D., F.I.C.S., F.R.E.S. (London) Professor and Head, Department of Endocrinology, P.G. Institute of Basic Medical Sciences for the ready and invaluable advice he has always extended readily and for provision of all the necessary laboratory facilities to execute this project.

My sincere thanks to Dr. M. Michael Aruldhas, Ph.D., and Dr. N. Srinivasan, Ph.D., Lecturers in the Department of Endocrinology, for their encouragement and Dr. J. Arunakaran, Ph.D., Department of Endocrinology, for his help in laboratory work.
I thank Mr. Muthu Mohammed, M.Sc., M.Phil., and the other research scholars of this department for lending a helping hand whenever necessary.

I would also like to thank my colleagues, Mr. S. Thameem dheen, M.Sc., and Mr. P. Sivasharmugam, M.Sc., for their co-operation and timely help during the period of the study.

The assistance extended by Mr. M. Sethuraman and Mr. S. Dawood, Laboratory assistants of this department, are also acknowledged.

I take this opportunity to thank my parents and sister for their unfailing support throughout the tenure of this course.