ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

My sincere thanks are due to:
Dr. Sipra Guha-Mukherjee, Associate Professor, S.L.S.,
J.N.U. for her guidance, help and constructive criticisms
on this manuscript;
Dr. Sudhir K. Sopory, Assistant Professor, S.L.S., J.N.U.
for his keen interest in my work, and many valuable
suggestions in the preparation of the manuscript;
Professor S. Mookerjee, F.N.A., Dean, S.L.S., J.N.U. and
Professor P.N. Srivastava, Rector, J.N.U., for providing
facilities for research work;
my colleagues and friends Neera Bhalla Sarin, Mohan Jain,
Neeta Chhabra, O. Ramaswamy, Vijaya Mohan and Neeraj Datta
for their help and companionship;
my friend S. Janaki, for help and critical comments,
while preparing the manuscript;
Sindhu Sharma, Sumita Pal, Mange Ram and N.S. Panwar for
their assistance in the laboratory;
P.K. Jain for typing the manuscript and R.N. Saini for
drawing line diagrams;
the NCERT and CSIR for providing financial assistance in
the form of a fellowship;

and, above all,
my parents, for their patience and understanding.

SUNITA TALWAR