

APPENDIX 1

DIETARY RESTRICTIONS AND DRUG INTERFERENCE PROBLEMS ASSOCIATED WITH THE MEASUREMENT OF SEROTONIN AND 5-HYDROXYINDOLEACETIC ACID (5-HIAA)

Certain foods – particularly avocado, banana, chocolate, egg plant, kiwi fruit, pineapples, plums, tomatoes and nuts – raise circulating concentrations of serotonin and 5-HIAA, and therefore must be excluded from the diet for several days prior to urine collection. Numerous drugs also interfere with laboratory results; these include aspirin, caffeine, adrenocorticotrophic hormone (ACTH), chlorophenylalanine, diazepam, ephedrine, ethanol, fluorouracil, glycerol, guaiacolate heparin, isoniazide, levodopa (L-dopa), melphalan, metamphetamine, methyldopa, monoamine oxidase (MOA) inhibitors, nicotine, paracetamol, phenobarbitol, phenothiazines, streptozotocin and tricyclic antidepressants. Most major hospital laboratories measure urinary 5-HIAA and advice should be sought from the laboratory regarding diet and drugs.