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Respiration

WATER HANDLING AND CHRONIC OBSTRUCTIVE LUNG DISEASE Because of the association of edema with chronic pulmonary disease, the authors tested the responses of 20 patients with chronic obstructive airway disease to a water load of 20 ml/kg and compared these responses with those of 13 healthy subjects. It was found that the percentage of water load excreted by the patients in 4 hours was significantly lower (mean 51 per cent) than that in the control group (mean 106 per cent). Maximum urine flow, osmolar clearance, free water clearance, and creatinine clearance were also significantly

lower in the patients. A significant inverse relationship between the percentage of water load passed and arterial P_{CO_2} was found. Although glomerular filtration was reduced in the patients, the authors did not feel this to be an important factor in the impaired water-load response. The precise mechanism for the impairment remains unclear, and further studies are in progress to examine proximal tubular function and vasopressin activity under these circumstances. (White, R. J., and Woodings, D. F.: *Impaired Water Handling in Chronic Obstructive Airway Disease, Brit. Med. J.* 2: 561 (June) 1971.)