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mission of the American Heart Association, Inc., and with the consent of Dr. Angelo Taranta, Chairman of the Study Group.

ADDENDUM

The following breakdown of the cost of a "strep only" throat culture came to my attention too late for inclusion in the above Commentary. This accounting was prepared by a university hospital laboratory director as justification for charging \$7.50 for each such culture. The technique employed is the inoculation of a sheep blood agar plate plus two weak bacitracin disks for differentiation of group A from other hemolytic streptococci.

Culturette (1)	0.12
Blood agar plates (average 1½ @ \$0.18)	0.27
Medical records, ward clerk, and plating time (25 min @ average \$2.00/hr)	0.75
Technologist's time (15 min @ average \$4.00/hr)	1.00
Taxos A disks (average 3 @ \$0.04)	0.12
Hospital administrative costs @ 56%	1.27
Professional component, including supervision, quality control, consultation, and so forth	1.76
Total	<u>\$5.29</u>

Obviously 40 minutes of personnel time (exclusive of professional supervision) is unreasonable. Granting that many other factors require consideration, ranging from the expense of a case of rheumatic fever on the one hand to the fact that the laboratory helps support other facets of hospital operation on the other, this cost is clearly prohibitive. Pediatricians and laboratory directors *must* find a better way.—E. A. M., JR.

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