

## Subject item

## Current situation and future trends

4. Simple analytical apparatus and reagents

The functions and objectives indicate the wet type in the sameway as the aforementioned dry chemistry systems. Although the cumulative number of apparatus is large, as was mentioned above, a great many users are switching to the dry type and there is a marked tendency for the wet type to decrease.

5. HCG sample kits

These are products marketed by various companies since the second half of 1986. The difference from conventional products is that the measurement time is short at 2 to 3 minutes and they are extremely easy to use. There are two types of measurement methods, ELA and latex agglutination. Switching from conventional products to simple kits is already progressing. The HCG companies control the market and new entries, etc., are very difficult.

## **B. OTC**

1. Pregnancy self-diagnosis chemicals

Although these are products that have formed the market since 1986, there has been very strong resistance from groups such as the Japanese Society of Physicians, etc. from the start. The Ministry of Health and Welfare has also expressed disapproval. Agreement is current being reached through discussions between the manufacturers, specialists and Ministry of Health and Welfare. Nonetheless, as for recognition by the common user, advertising and publicity are limited and there has been no major market expansion. From the product standpoint, the measurement time is short (currently primarily within 30 minutes), the results can be checked from the day of the expected menstrual period (this could be done from 1 week after the expected menstrual period in the past), the existence of color changes is checked after examining the ring shapes, the q designation has been improved, etc. Several tens of companies have currently entered the market (some manufacturers have also already withdrawn). Competition between companies will probably become vigorous in the future.

2. Blood sugar self-measurement reagents and diabetes apparatus

These are small apparatus and reagents used for insulin-dependent diabetes patients to measure their own blood sugar values. There are said to be from 200,000 to 250,000 insulin-dependent in Japan. The cumulative number of such apparatus is from 70 to 80 thousand. Close to half of these are said to not be in use. This is because patients who are capable of monitoring themselves are limited and the apparatus are not used by the elderly, etc. Daikin Kogyo is expected to be a new entry. This company's product is said to be of the electrode type rather than the conventional test.