Stability of Triglycerides in Serum

To the Editor:
The stability of triglycerides in serum as reported by Frings (1) in a recent letter to Clinical Chemistry is consistent with data that we have presented (2). Henry has reported "a 0-10% decrease (of triglyceride) in 6 days at 25 °C" (3). Rehkämper (4) presents data indicating that free glycerol increases in serum samples on storage, either at room temperature or under refrigeration. The assumption that this increase is due to breakdown of triglyceride does not seem warranted by available data.

A better perspective on the problem of the increase in free glycerol is obtained by converting the glycerol values to triglyceride values. The 33.7% increase in free glycerol reported (4) for specimen No. 1 after storage for two days at refrigerator temperatures represents a change of about 3 mg of triglyceride per deciliter. This same specimen exhibited a 69.4% increase in free glycerol after storage for two days at 25 °C, which corresponds to about 7 mg of triglyceride per deciliter. These changes are fairly small, even if the assumption that the increased glycerol is derived from triglyceride is correct.

References

Joseph L. Giegel
Clinical Chemistry R&D DADE, Division American Hospital Supply Corp.
Miami, Fla. 33152

NATIONAL REGISTRY IN CLINICAL CHEMISTRY

For information write:
MRS. SUZANNE ROETHL
1155 SIXTEENTH STREET, N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20036