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The Art of Nature: Urine under the Microscope

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Microscopic analysis of urine sediment has been called the nonbloody renal biopsy. In addition to its important diagnostic clues, microscopy of the urine sediment may also provide unexpected artistic images (Figure 1, A through G).

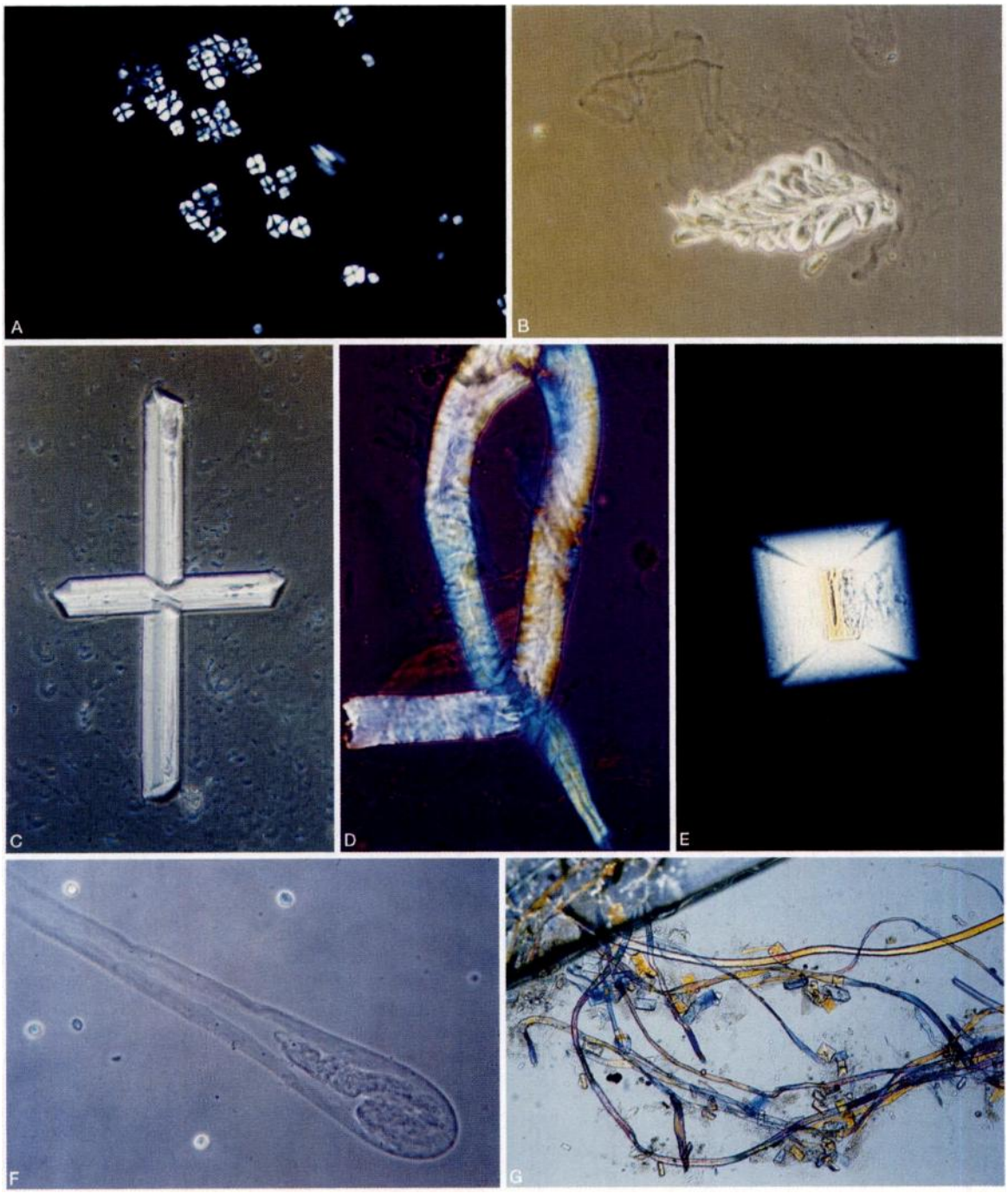

Figure 1. (A) Cat eyes in a dark night (starch particles, polarized light, ×400). (B) Dragon fish (shell-like calcium phosphate crystals, phase contrast, ×400). (C) Southern cross constellation (rod-like triple phosphate crystals, phase contrast, ×400). (D) AIDS activist pin (hair, polarized light, ×400). (E) Diamond (triple phosphate crystal, polarized light, ×400). (F) Halley's comet in a cloudless sky of stars (mucus and erythrocytes, phase contrast, ×400). (G) Expressionist painting of unknown painter (cotton fibers and triple phosphate crystals, polarized light, ×100).