



Fig. 1. A schematic figure showing the thicknesses of the 2 mucus gel layers in vivo in the corpus, antrum, midduodenum, proximal jejunum, distal ileum, and proximal colon of the rat gastrointestinal tract. The mucus gel layer was continuous and did not follow the contours of the villi in the intestine. However, on removal of the loosely adherent layer, mucus was also removed between the villi, leaving behind a firmly adherent mucus layer attached to the mucosa. In the stomach and colon, the firmly adherent layer was continuous, but in the small intestine the firmly adherent layer had a patchy distribution and was absent on individual villi. Both mucus gel layers were translucent. The loosely adherent mucus layer was removable by careful suction, whereas the firmly adherent mucus layer was not. The table presents values for mucus thickness as means  $\pm$  SE for each group.