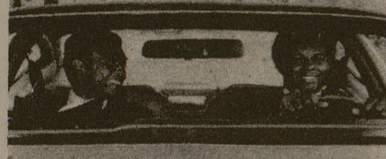


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Painless heart test detected

By DALE SINGER
United Press International
ST. LOUIS — A simple, painless alternative has been developed for some heart patients faced with the choice of having a tube inserted into the chambers of their heart or having radioactive material injected into their blood.
They are widely used methods of measuring the strength of a patient's heart to see how well it is doing what it is designed to do — pump blood through the body.
The new method, developed at St. Luke's Hospital in St. Louis, merely requires the patient to lie

down on a table for 10 minutes. It uses the principle of the see-saw on a fulcrum plus Newton's Law of physics — mass multiplied by acceleration equals force.
Dr. Robert Paine, head of the hospital's cardiology laboratory, is one of a team of professionals involved in perfecting the new procedure and testing it on patients at a number of hospitals.
Results so far have shown good correlations between results of the older, accepted practices of testing the heart and the new device, known as the MEF Recorder for mass, energy and force.
The benefits to the patients are many, Paine said in an interview. In cardiac catheterization, a tube must be inserted directly into a chamber of the heart to take measurements.
Nuclear testing requires the injection of radioactive-tagged material into a vein, where it is carried along to the heart and its progress is traced by a Geiger counter on the patient's chest.

Paine emphasized that cardiac catheterization is still considered the best test for measuring pressures within the heart and to measure the dimensions of the heart's chambers. It is also needed by surgeons contemplating bypass surgery so they can pinpoint the location of vital blood vessels.
"Our procedure tells the mechanical performance of the heart," Paine said, "whether it is working well and whether it could stand an operation. After surgery it would tell whether the operation benefited the patient and made the heart pump better."
"This does not displace the catheter as the ultimate source of information but it tells you who is in serious need of catheterization. In addition it tells something catheterization doesn't tell, what the final product of the heart's action is. It's like the bottom line in an accountant's list."
A patient being tested on the MEF Recorder lies on a table and is

hooked up to sensors that simultaneously record an electrocardiogram and the carotid pulse in the neck — allowing technicians to compare those standard readings with results from the newer test.
A super-sensitive gauge measures changes in the table's position as the patient's heart beats. With this force measured, and the mass of the patient's heart judged from X-rays, the acceleration can be determined and the heart's strength can be charted.
"Acceleration is the determinant of the rate at which the heart contracts at each beat," Paine said. "The basic work of the heart is to accelerate blood, like a slingshot shoots out a rock. A healthy heart slings that rock out with greater acceleration than a weak heart."
The machine is the result of cooperation between scientists, doctors and engineers at the University of Missouri, who solved problems with the device. It produces the machine and holder of its patent.

Study shows change

Women switching away from oral contraceptives

United Press International
CHICAGO — Adverse publicity may be the reason some women are giving up oral contraceptives, according to a report published today in the Journal of the American Medical Association.
A study of 100 women at the San Francisco Medical Center showed 53 per cent changed contraception methods in the last two years, and most switched away from oral contraceptives, the report said.
Dr. Nancy Kaltefleiter found eight women relied on sterilization, 16 used no contraception, one used a mechanical barrier device such as a diaphragm, foam or condom for birth control. Only 28 took oral contraceptives, and 16 had intrauterine devices.
The possibility of hazardous side effects was the reason given by 14

women who were dissatisfied with their current method.
The study also reported a decrease of formal marriages in the population, a reduction in the number of children, and an increase in acceptance of homosexual relationships.

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