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93 percent survival rate achieved

Chinese successful in reattaching limbs

United Press International
TORONTO — Chinese surgeons, pioneers in reattaching severed limbs, report survival rates as high as 93 percent in replanting arms, legs,

feet and fingers amputated in accidents.

Hundreds of such operations have been performed since the first reattachment of a severed hand was reported by the Shanghai Sixth People's Hospital in 1963.

In a report to the annual meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, Dr. Chen Zhong-Wei, chief of the orthopedic department at the hospital, said the highest success rates have occurred since 1973 when surgeons started using microscopes to aid the reconnection of small blood vessels.

In one group of 256 patients who were studied for three years after surgery, Chen said 69.5 percent were able to resume their original work or take up other work. Twenty-seven percent were able to carry on daily life but not work full-time and only 3.5 percent had no functional

recovery. Chen said that although a severed limb can usually be replanted successfully these days, such surgery cannot be done on every patient.

He said the patient's general condition must be good enough to permit him to undergo the complicated and relatively prolonged surgery.

Other injuries resulting from the accident must be dealt with before replantation can start, he said, and the severed limb must be preserved until surgery can begin.

"In order to achieve survival and good functional recovery of the replanted limb, the essential structures of the dismembered part of the severed limb must be relatively intact," he said.

The degree of damage to the amputated limb depends on the type of accident.

Chen said in one series of 250

severed limbs, 77 percent were involved in a cutting injury and 72 survived replantation for a survival rate of 93.6 percent. He said the dismembered part remained essentially intact when cut by a sharp instrument.

Limbs severed by crushing injury, usually caused by a punching machine or heavy objects, had a survival rate of 86.7 percent. Eighty-eight percent of limbs severed by rolling wheels or gears survived after replantation.

The lowest survival rates in the study occurred when limbs were severed by avulsive injury — pulled apart, usually by a limb being caught in some kind of rapidly rotating machine.

Chen said limbs severed by this type of injury often had long segments of blood vessels and nerves damaged. He said 36 of 48 limbs amputated by this kind of accident

were successfully replanted for a survival rate of 75 percent.

In the same study of 250 severed limbs, Chen said the success rate was closely related to the time the limb went without blood circulation.

Seventy-two limbs were reattached after being severed less than six hours earlier and 68 survived at a rate of 94.4 percent. In 102 limbs the time between the accident and surgery was between 6 and 10 hours and 90 percent survived.

The survival rate was 76.7 percent for 60 limbs reattached after a period of 10 to 20 hours, and the survival rate dropped to 68.8 percent for limbs reattached after 20 hours.

Chen said, however, that the method of limb preservation and local temperature at the time of the accident also were important factors influencing reattachment success.

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Fort Worth man's record collection of over 1 million fills three houses, two sheds

United Press International
FORT WORTH — Looking for Perry Como's Christmas album of the 1940s? Beatrice Kay's "Naughty Nineties" collection of the 1930s? Or maybe the California Ramblers' pop jazz band music of the 1920s? John Taylor of Fort Worth can help.

The 76-year-old retired Corps of Engineers employee is an extraordinary collector of records — he has more than 1 million albums and singles.

"I don't know exactly how many," he said. Taylor also doesn't know what specific records he owns.

"I used to carry books around with me so I wouldn't buy duplicates, but that got to be too much trouble," the white-haired man said.

It became too much trouble when his listings were too large to conveniently "carry around." Only half of his million-plus records are alphabetized. It is next to impossible to find any specific record in the unorganized section.

What began as a search for rumba, fox trot and tango music when he took dancing lessons 27 years ago grew into a full-time profession when Taylor retired 12 years ago.

"As my collection grew, I had to buy houses to put them (the records) in. I started out with a little box about so big," he said, holding his hands about three feet apart.

The cardboard box is now the house across the street, the house next door, a house six blocks away and two large sheds in the backyards.

A visit to the houses is a tour through modern musical history. Taylor seems to know a little about everything and when pulling out Beatrice Kay's albums he described her as a "red-hot mama singer" of the 1930s.

His collection begins with early 1900s selections. These older discs have songs on only one side and are so thick it would seem they couldn't break.

But others do. The floors of the backyard sheds are covered with chips of broken records. One can't help but crunch half of a record here and there while walking in the narrow aisles. Records are stacked in dust-covered groups from floor to ceiling. Boxes of records are in the rafters overhead.

Someone broke into one of the houses recently and stole a record player and Taylor's golf clubs.

"He didn't steal any records. But of course, I couldn't tell if he did — there are so many out there," he said.

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