

FROM:
Public Relations Department
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BIOGRAPHICAL DATA

VIRGINIA APGAR, M.D., M.P.H.

Director, Division of Congenital Malformations Research
The National Foundation-March of Dimes

Dr. Virginia Apgar of Tenafly, N.J., was appointed to the research staff of The National Foundation in July 1959, to head the Division of Congenital Malformations.

She is a noted specialist in the problems of newborn infants and is the creator of the "Apgar Score," a clinical evaluation made within 60 seconds after birth to determine the baby's over-all condition by checking heart rate, respiration, muscle tone, reflexes and color. The information is useful in making a prognosis of the baby's chances for survival and in alerting physicians to the need for emergency procedures. The test has become standard procedure in hospitals in many countries.

Before joining The National Foundation, Dr. Apgar was professor of anesthesiology at Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons. She was the first professor of anesthesiology and the first woman physician to hold a full professorship at that institution, where she assisted in training some 250 physicians in the science of anesthesiology. As attending anesthesiologist at the Presbyterian Hospital in New York City, and consultant anesthesiologist at Valley Hospital in Ridgewood, N.J., and Goldwater Memorial and Triborough Hospitals in New York City, she assisted in the delivery of more than 17,000 infants.

Dr. Apgar is the author of more than 60 publications for physicians on anesthesiology, resuscitation and congenital anomalies, as well as numerous articles on these subjects for laymen. She is widely known as a medical lecturer in the United States, Canada, England, Australia and New Zealand. In 1965, she was appointed Lecturer in Pediatrics (Teratology), the first appointment in the nation to include birth defects as a subspecialty, at Cornell University Medical College.

Medical societies to which Dr. Apgar belongs include the Harvey Society, Alpha Omega Alpha, American Association for the Advancement of Science, the Allan O. Whipple Surgical Society, Teratology Society, American Society of Human Genetics, Genetics Society of America, American Public Health Association, Drug Information Association and the Twenty-five Year Club of the Presbyterian Hospital. She holds certificate #50 of the American Board of Anesthesiology. A fellow of the American College of Anesthesiology, she has served on the organization's Board of Governors and was chairman in 1951 and 1952. She is a fellow of the New York Academy of Medicine and of the New York Academy of Sciences.

Honors held by Dr. Apgar are Mt. Holyoke College's Alumnae Award, 1954; New York Infirmary's Elizabeth Blackwell Citation for Distinguished Service to Medicine by a Woman, 1960; and the Distinguished Service Award given by the American Society of Anesthesiologists for contributions to the specialty, 1961. She was awarded an honorary Doctor of Medical Science degree by Women's Medical College of Pennsylvania in 1964 and an honorary Doctor of Science degree by Mt. Holyoke College in 1965.

Born in Westfield, N.J., Dr. Apgar graduated from Mt. Holyoke College and received her medical training at Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons. She also holds a master's degree in public health from The Johns Hopkins University.

Music is one of Dr. Apgar's avocations. She has played the viola with the Teaneck, N.J., and other symphony orchestras, and is a member of the Amateur Chamber Music Players. She makes stringed instruments in her leisure time, and is treasurer of the Catgut Acoustical Society. She is an ardent gardener and photographer and is also a member of the American Philatelic Society.

Dr. Apgar is an honorary member of The American Society of Anesthesiologists, New York State Society of Anesthesiology, Washington State Obstetrical Society, the Alaska Medical Society; honorary associate fellow of the American Academy of Pediatrics, and an associate fellow of the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists. In 1964, she was elected Honorary Member of The Society of the Alumni of Sloane Hospital for Women and became an Honorary Diplomate in the Pan American Medical Association. She was named a member-at-large of the Methodist Board of Hospitals and Homes in 1965.

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