

# Virginia Apgar

by Guy Belleranti

Virginia Apgar earned her medical degree from Columbia University in 1933. Her goal was to establish herself as a surgeon.

She began as a surgical intern and resident for three years at Columbia Presbyterian Hospital. Then, the head of the surgical department advised her to enter the field of obstetrics during the depression era and since many other women fail trying to meet the same fate.

Struggling to secure additional training at Bellevue Hospital in New York.

Then, she returned to get Board Certification and became the first woman to perform surgery at Columbia University.

Dr. Apgar soon concentrated on obstetric anesthesiology. This is where she would make her biggest mark. She became passionate on the health and welfare of newborn infants. She pointed out that both mother and infant were patients. Since newborn deaths were highest in the first 24 hours after birth, she decided newborn conditions needed more careful monitoring.



Dr. Whipple had seen her and wanted Virginia Apgar to

take his advice. She received her training at Bellevue Hospital in

Philadelphia, the second woman to become a gynecologist. She also

headed the department of obstetrics. Dr. Apgar became the

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To do this monitoring she developed the Newborn Scoring System. This system was a precursor to the Apgar score, a system that uses Dr Apgar's initials. The Apgar scoring system became the standard in hospitals throughout the world. It greatly improved infant survival rates.

Basically, the Apgar system evaluates the newborn infant using five observable signs. A is for Appearance or color. P is for Pulse or heart rate. G is for Grimace, the baby's reflexes and response to irritation. A is for Activity or movement of arms and legs. And R is for Respiration, is the baby breathing easily.

Dr. Apgar decided to check the baby again at five minutes after birth. When the scores at one minute and five minutes were added together, either the one minute score or the five minute score was needed.

Virginia Apgar's work led to the creation of the Virginia Apgar Foundation for Infant Mortality Research. Here, she concentrated on research and raising funds for related medical topics.

Dr. Apgar accomplished much in medicine. However, she also had other interests. She loved fishing and stamp collecting. And she had a great love for music. She was an accomplished cellist and violinist. She even built some of her own instruments.

Virginia Apgar died in 1974 at the age of 65. Twenty years later the U.S. Postal Service honored her with a stamp bearing her picture.

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one minute after birth and the best score. The scores at one minute and five minutes. If the total is under 5 at five minutes, medical attention and intervention is needed. A score of 7 or higher with the Apgar score. Dr. Apgar lectured at the National Conference on the March of Dimes. She was a pioneer in the study of birth defects throughout the world, lecturing on

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- 1) According to the writer which of the following is the most important among the various details mentioned in the text?
- a) Dr. Apgar's great efforts in the prevention of birth defects
  - b) Her path-breaking accomplishments in assessing the overall well-being of new-born infants
  - c) Her inspiring other women to surpass men and achieve great heights in the medical field
  - d) Dr. Apgar's setting an example for people by practicing a plethora of pastimes while being

- 2) With what interest was she involved in the field of anesthesiology? \_\_\_\_\_'s interest towards

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- 3) Enumerate Virgi

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4) How does paragraph ten complement the overall structure of the text, despite containing little information about the core idea discussed in the article?

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5) Obstetrics is the midwifery. Find nearby hospital:

with childbirth and only practiced in your

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