

Eugene Bernard Spitz

Eugene Bernard Spitz pediatric neurosurgeon died December 2006 of complications from diabetes.

In the early 1950s, Dr. Spitz was a pediatric neurosurgeon at Children's Hospital in Philadelphia when he pioneered an operation for hydrocephalus in infants. The condition causes a dangerous buildup of spinal fluid in the brain. Dr. Spitz implanted a shunt to drain off the fluid and later modified the procedure with a valve invented by [John Holter](#), an engineer whose infant son suffered from the condition.

Dr. Spitz also developed brain surgeries to treat children with tumors and with epilepsy. He was an advocate for aggressive treatments for the mentally impaired such as patterning, in which a child's limbs are moved to simulate crawling.

He treated children from all over the world and held clinics for brain specialists all over the country, a friend and colleague, Dr. Lorraine King, said. Despite his accomplishments, she said, he was humble and caring.

In the mid-1960s, Dr. Spitz became chief of neurosurgery at Crozer-Chester Medical Center. He cofounded Broad Street Hospital in Philadelphia in the 1970s and performed surgeries there until the hospital closed in 1988. For many years he maintained a private practice in Morton and then in Swarthmore. He retired in March.

A native of Queens, N.Y., Dr. Spitz completed his medical training by the time he was 25. He was a 12-year-old in knickers when he began his undergraduate studies at New York University, his daughter Jane said. He earned his medical degree at NYU and then completed a residency in pathology. During World War II he did research for the Navy.

After deciding to become a neurologist, he completed a residency at the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania and was later an associate professor at Penn's medical school.

Dr. Spitz had a pilot's license and loved to fly from Philadelphia to his vacation home at the Jersey Shore. His wife, Eleanor S. Spitz, was his navigator. "He had a terrible sense of direction," Jane Spitz said. He enjoyed opera, classical music, and tennis.

In addition to his daughters, Dr. Spitz is survived by daughters Kathryn Tagliaterra, Adrienne Brenz, and Mary Margaret; a son, Eugene Jr.; a brother; 10 grandchildren; and eight great-grandchildren. His wife of 55 years died in 2001.

A memorial service will be at 11 a.m. today at Christ Episcopal Church, 311 S. Orange St., Media. Friends may call from 9:30 to 10:30 a.m. at Cavanagh-Patterson Funeral Home, 43 E. Baltimore Ave., Media.

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