

# Eponyms in Gynecology and Obstetrics

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## INTRODUCTION

Many of the terms used in Gynecology and Obstetrics are descriptive and they are derived from Latin or Greek. However, there are other types of nomenclature used. For examples acronyms, such as "TORCH" [Toxoplasmosis, Others (HBV, syphilis, Varicella-Zoster virus, Epstein Barr virus, Coxsackie virus and Parvovirus), Rubella, Cytomegalovirus (CMV) and Herpes

Simplex]<sup>1</sup>. Another example, is HELLP Syndrome, which is an acronym for Haemolysis, Elevated Liver enzyme levels and Low Platelet Count<sup>2</sup>.

Abbreviations are, also used. For examples, "PID" (Pelvic Inflammatory Disease), and "LMP" (Last Menstrual Period).

Eponym is a name derived from the name of a person<sup>3</sup>. There are several eponyms in Gynecology and Obstetrics literature. Some of

these eponyms are old and some of them new. Some are no longer used while others are still in use. They are originated from different parts of the world.

Many doctors have no information about the history of eponyms. In this mini-review, we meant to shed some light on selected eponyms in Gynecology and Obstetrics (Table 1<sup>4-27</sup>)

**Table 1: Selected Eponyms in Gynecology and Obstetrics**

Eponyms in Gynecology and Obstetrics	Remarks
Apgar score <sup>4</sup>	This is a famous score used to assess the health of newborn children immediately after birth. Apgar score ranges from zero to 10. The five criteria are summarized using words chosen to form a backronym (Appearance, Pulse, Grimace, Activity, and Respiration). Named after an American obstetrical anesthesiologist, Virginia Apgar (1909-1974), (figure.1).
Braxton Hicks contractions <sup>5,6</sup>	These are sporadic uterine contractions that sometimes start around six weeks into a pregnancy. Named after, John Braxton Hicks (1823 – 1897), (figure.2), who was a 19th-century English doctor who specialized in obstetrics.
Brenner tumors <sup>7,8</sup>	Brenner tumors are uncommon tumors that are part of the surface epithelial-stromal tumor group of ovarian neoplasms. The majority of these tumors are benign. It is named for Fritz Brenner (1877- 1969), (figure.3), who was a German physician and pathologist. In 1935 Brenner migrated to South Africa. It was whilst he was in Johannesburg that he was surprised to learn that his name was eponymously attached to the tumor.
Cullen sign <sup>9</sup>	Periumbilical ecchymosis in cases of acute hemorrhagic pancreatitis and ruptured ectopic pregnancy is termed Cullen's sign. Similar changes in the flank are called as Grey-Turner sign. Thomas Stephen Cullen (1868-1953), (figure. 4), was a Canadian gynecologist associated with Johns Hopkins Hospital.
Fallopian tube <sup>10</sup>	This known anatomical structure is named after, Gabriele Falloppio (1523-1562), (figure.5), who was an Italian anatomist. It is said that throughout the doctor's life, he discouraged the use of his name to describe the invention. Falloppio was a keen botanist and the plant genus «fallopia» is named after him.
Fitz-Hugh and Curtis syndrome <sup>11-13</sup>	This is a rare complication of pelvic inflammatory disease (PID) named after the two physicians, Thomas Fitz-Hugh, Jr and Arthur Hale Curtis. Arthur Hale Curtis (1881 – 1955), (figure.6), was an American gynecologist. Thomas Fitz-Hugh, Jr (1894- 1963), (figure.7), was an American physician.

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Gartner cyst <sup>14</sup>	It is usually an asymptomatic vaginal cyst, which develops from the wolffian duct remnants in the vaginal wall .Named after, Hermann Treschow Gartner (1785-1827), who was a Danish surgeon and anatomist.
Gaskin maneuver <sup>15</sup>	Also, known as all-fours maneuver .It consists of moving the laboring patient to her hands and knees. This technique is used for reducing shoulder dystocia in laboring women. It is named after, Ina May Gaskin, (figure.8), an American Midwife.
Hydatids of Morgagni <sup>16-18</sup>	These are pedunculated, cystic structures arising from müllerian vestiges below the fallopian tube near the fimbria. They usually are of no clinical significance unless the pedicle becomes twisted and infarction occurs. Giovanni Battista Morgagni (1682 – 1771), (figure.9), was an Italian anatomist.
Kegel exercises <sup>19</sup>	It refers to pelvic floor exercise, used for the treatment of many urogynecological disorders including urinary incontinence. Arnold Henry Kegel (1894 – 1981), (figure.10) was an American gynecologist.
Krukenberg’s tumor <sup>20,21</sup>	A malignant tumor of the ovary, usually bilateral, with fibromyxomatous stroma and scattered mucin secreting signet cells .Named after, a German gynecologist and pathologist, Friedrich Ernst Krukenberg (1871-1946).
Meigs syndrome <sup>22-24</sup>	It refers to the presence of ascites with hydrothorax in association with benign ovarian tumor. It is named for Joe Vincent Meigs (1892-1963), (figure.11), a Harvard Medical School Professor of Gynecology.
Papanicolaou’s smear <sup>25</sup>	Also called Pap test and Pap smear. It is a cytodiagnostic test for early detection of cervical cancer. Named after George Nicholas Papanicolaou (1883-1962), (Figure. 12), who was a Greek-American cytologist and pathologist.
Sheehan’s syndrome <sup>26</sup>	It refers to postpartum necrosis of the anterior pituitary gland, occurring as consequence of ischemia after severe puerperal hemorrhage. It is named for Harold Leeming Sheehan (1900-1988), (figure.13), who was an English pathologist.
Stein-Leventhal syndrome <sup>27</sup>	This is another name for polycystic ovarian syndrome (PCOS) .A condition characterized by menstrual dysfunction, anovulation, and signs of hyperandrogenism.  It is named after, Irving Freiler Stein (1887-1976), (figure.14), who was an American gynecologist and his colleague, Michael Leo Leventhal (1901-1971), (figure.15).



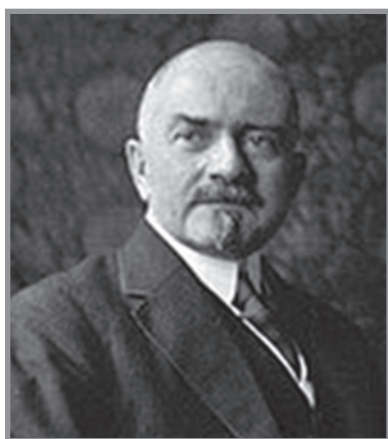
Virginia Apgar (1909-1974)



John Braxton Hicks (1823-1897)



Fritz Brenner (1877-1969)



Thomas Stephen Cullen (1868-1953)



Gabriele Falloppio (1523-1562)



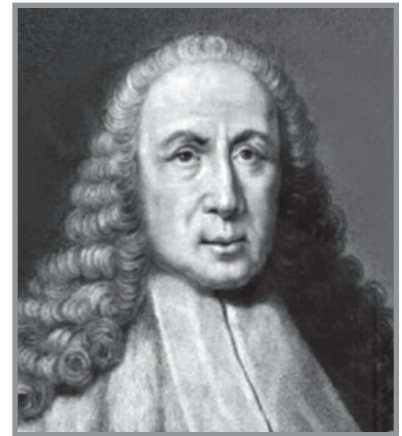
Arthur Hale Curtis (1881 –1955)



Thomas Fitz-Hugh, Jr (1894-1963)



Ina May Gaskin (1940- )



Giovanni Battista Morgagni (1682-1771)



Arnold Henry Kegel (1894-1981)



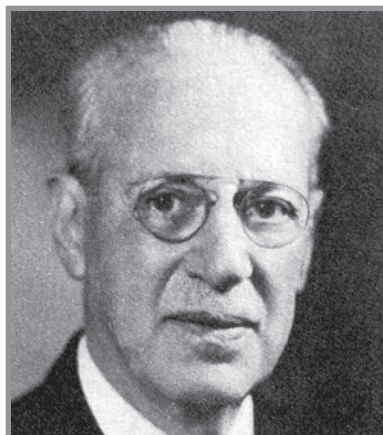
Joe Vincent Meigs (1892-1963)



George N Papanicolaou (1883-1962)



Harold Leeming Sheehan (1900-1988)



Irving Freiler Stein (1887-1976)



Michael Leo Leventhal (1901-1971)

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