

NEW METHOD ARTIFICIAL RESPIRATION ADOPTED BY RED CROSS

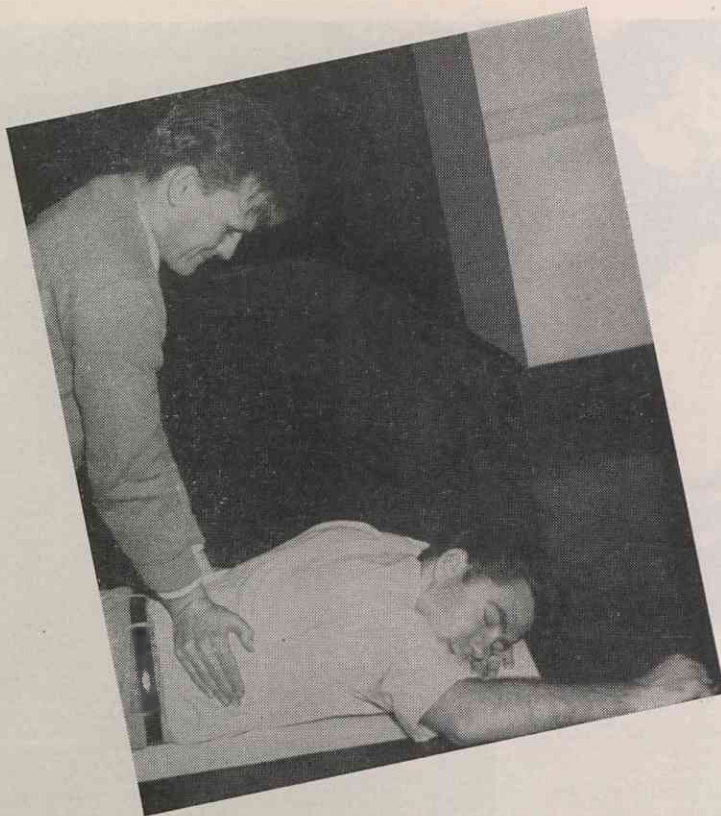


Photo at left shows old, out-dated method of administering artificial respiration. Demonstrating Prone Pressure Method (old method) are Brad Harrison and Bill Norris (both in Main Office).

The American National Red Cross, together with the armed services, several industrial firms, and other agencies and organizations, has adopted the back pressure—arm left method of manual artificial respiration as preferable to the prone pressure which has been standard in the United States for many years.

Research leading to the change in method began prior to World War II, when investigators first doubted the prone pressure method was of superior effectiveness. Since that time the Red Cross has conducted extensive studies in the fields of respiration and asphyxia. The armed forces also have been investigating the problems of respiration and asphyxia. Approximately two years ago the Army Medical Corps had to consider the problem of giving artificial respiration to a large number of people in the event of warfare when poison or nerve gas might be used.

To obtain scientific evidence on the comparative effectiveness of several methods, Army Chemical Corps research teams were organized and study was made of the amount of air exchange induced by various methods of artificial respiration, the ease of learning various methods, and the ease of teaching various methods.

The results of the research showed that the prone pressure method was less effective in the amount of air exchanged. A one-phase method,

it compresses the chest but does not actively expand it. However, in the two-phase methods—such as the back-pressure arm-lift, the hip-lift, and the Silvester—the chest is actively expanded and compressed by the rescuer.

Research also showed that the hip-lift back-pressure method and the hip-roll back-pressure method are difficult to perform and cannot be done at all by frail rescuers on heavy victims. The Silvester method, for which the victim is placed on his back, was considered unsatisfactory for use by the general public since it is difficult to keep the air passages open.

The back-pressure arm-lift method was recommended because it does not tire the rescuer unduly, can be performed by a small person on a heavy victim, and is relatively easy to teach.

The Red Cross will include the new method in first aid and life saving courses as soon as possible. Supplements on the new system are being printed for inclusion in its first aid and water safety textbooks. The supplement will be available through Red Cross chapters at no charge.

The Red Cross pointed out that because of the widespread teaching program, the changeover cannot be accomplished immediately. Millions of persons already trained in the prone pressure method, which has saved many lives, should continue to use it until they have received training in the new method.