

**NAVY FLIGHT SURGEON:
AVIATION
MEDICINE
SPECIALIST**

GO NAVY

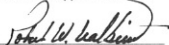
FOREWORD

This booklet is intended to provide a synopsis of a Navy Flight Surgeon's responsibilities.

Details of special courses in aerospace medicine, internships and residencies, medical school scholarships and other education opportunities indirectly related to the profession of Navy Flight Surgeon, as well as information on the Navy Medical Department's organization may be obtained by writing the Bureau of Medicine and Surgery, Navy Department, Washington, D.C. 20372.

Information may also be obtained from any Navy Recruiting District listed in the telephone book under "U. S. Government." Or call toll-free, 24 hours a day, **800-841-8000** for the location of the nearest Officer Information Team.

Reviewed and Approved 1 Jul 74


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RAD 74184





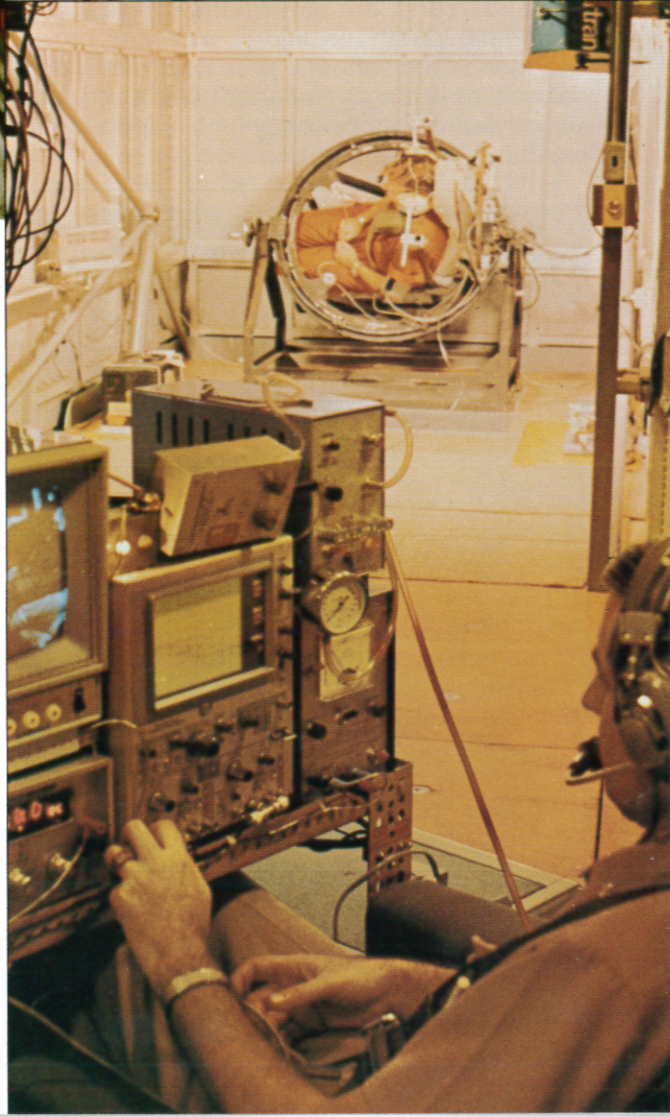
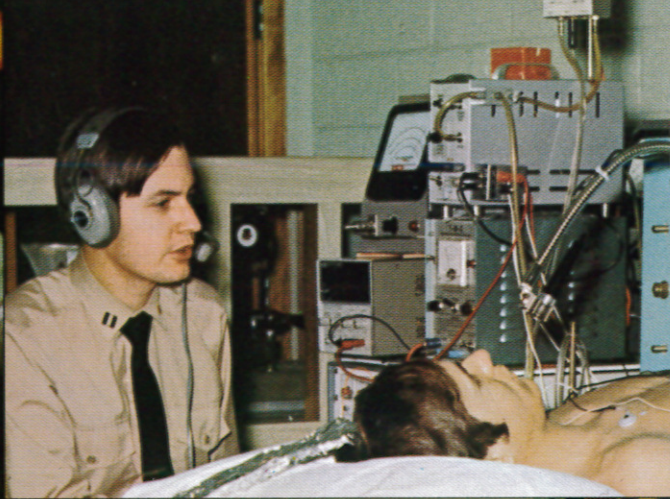
NEW BREED

The designation, "Flight Surgeon" as an occupational title no longer fully or adequately describes the Navy physician who practices aerospace medicine. Nor does it accurately describe his function.

Why? Well, primarily because of the development of the supersonic aircraft and electronically-controlled aerial warfare. These inventions have nearly totally changed the aerial environment and placed more and different stresses upon those who fly.

Precisely because of these new stress factors scientists, including physicians, have pioneered a second frontier in aerospace medicine to accommodate man to his new environment.

Among these pioneers is the Navy Flight Surgeon, a unique mix of physician, flier, scientist and Naval officer. If his military designation is old his practice is contemporary. It is in fact an amalgam of challenge and responsibility not duplicated anywhere else in medical practice.



THE ENVIRONMENT

The stresses of flying, navigating, fighting and “thinking” one of the Navy’s carrier-based aircraft are considerable. Even for the superbly healthy, strongly-motivated and exquisitely-trained men of the Fleet.

Their environment, particularly at sea, is characterized by confined movement in small spaces; loud and repeated noises; peer pressure to excel beyond “average” norms; limited recreation and sports; the always-present danger of accidental death or injury; frequent radical changes in atmospheric pressure; often, days on end of strength-sapping heat; and occasionally—only occasionally—the mind-blowing exultation of free flight.



SQUADRON DOCTOR

Into this clangorous, syncopated world of naval aviation comes a man just as specially equipped as the aviator: the naval aerospace medicine specialist, or Navy Flight Surgeon.

Young, professional, ambitious and dedicated, the NFS is warmly accepted by fellow squadron members as one of the team. He flies with the pilots and gets to know their problems aloft as well as on the deck and shares in the general esprit peculiar to naval air.

Because he’s personally been through basic pilot training including solo flight and also is a trained medical observer, the Navy Flight Surgeon can as easily commiserate with jittery junior birdmen as he can spot the danger signs in an over-stressed veteran.

Of course, there’s more to being a Navy Flight Surgeon than simply pinning on a set of wings. For first of all, you are a physician. Later you become an operational military medicine specialist.

The essence of the practice of naval aerospace medicine is that of being with the men and women you serve. The navy word for it is “operational.” Any doctor who expects to engage in a narrow, institutional specialty to the exclusion of a broad-base clinical and occupational practice shouldn’t seek to enter a career of naval aerospace medicine.

DUTIES

The Flight Surgeon associates himself with the immediate environment of the pilot as closely as possible. He attempts to know intimately each pilot, aircrewman and their families to learn of any unusual circumstances which might adversely affect their flight proficiency. He must be familiar with the operational missions his unit might be called upon to undertake and must ensure that every effort is made to apply aeromedical considerations to the human factors involved to improve, if possible, the military capabilities of the command.

The Flight Surgeon should be conversant with the flight characteristics of the aircraft assigned to his unit and should gain an understanding of individual pilot reactions to these aircraft. Unusual apprehension or anxiety resulting from assignment to specific aircraft should be recognized and evaluated in connection with the background, training and capabilities of the aviator.

Particular note must be made of the sum total of stresses to which flying personnel are subjected during the course of a mission; such as fatigue, noise and vibration, repeated change of altitude, unfavorable weather, navigational difficulties, combat and night carrier operations.

Flight Surgeons participate actively in the aerospace physiology training program. Training is presented in the physiological aspects of reduced barometric pressure, acceleration, temperature effects, noxious gases, airsickness, disorientation, fatigue, first aid, ionizing radiation, night vision and other factors which apply to operational missions.



Flight Surgeons are provided indoctrination in the use and physiological implications of airborne personal equipment; such as antiblackout suits, oxygen systems with particular emphasis on regulators and masks, antiexposure suits, survival equipment, pressure suits, parachutes, crash helmets and noise protective devices, ejection seats, escape capsules and other protective and safety equipment.



NAMI

The following subjects as well as others are taught at the Naval Aerospace Medical Institute, Pensacola, Florida. The NAMI academic course lasts approximately 20 weeks and is followed by six weeks of flight training at nearby Saufley Field where Flight Surgeon Candidates learn to fly—and solo—the T-34 and T-28 aircraft.

AEROSPACE MEDICINE SYLLABUS

SUBJECT	HOURS
Aircraft Accident Investigation	4
Aviation Dentistry	5
Aviation Pathology	4
Aviation Physical Examination Clinic	3
Aviation Safety and Crash Investigation	3
Life Support Sciences Lab	30
Medical Aspects of NBC Warfare Defense	2
Neuropsychiatry	36
Neuropsychiatry Clinic	24
Operational Field Trips	10
Operational Medicine	23
Otorhinolaryngology Clinic	12
Psychology	6
Research Orientation	4
Shipboard Orientation Cruise	9
Special Board of Flight Surgeons	24
Special Guest Lectures	5
Surgery	8



SPECIALIZATION

Flight Surgeons qualify for further post-graduate training leading to certification by the American Board of Preventive Medicine in Aerospace Medicine. This is a rapidly-growing, challenging medical specialty. Included in this training is an academic year in Preventive Medicine and Public Health at an approved civilian university. During the residency training phase, the Candidate may pursue his particular interests with emphasis on clinical, research or general aspects of aerospace medicine.



CROSS TRAINING

A limited number of Flight Surgeons may profitably combine their aerospace medicine training and practice with a clinical specialty such as ophthalmology, medicine, surgery, otorhinolaryngology, psychiatry and others.

Application for Aerospace Medical Training Courses

After applying for a commission as an officer in the Navy Medical Corps through a local Navy Recruiting District, applicants should mail a request for training to the Bureau of Medicine and Surgery, in Washington, D.C.

Classes at Pensacola are scheduled to accommodate up to 50 Flight Surgeon Candidates but generally are kept smaller to maximize Instructor-to-Candidate relationship.

A sample of an application letter appears below.

From:

To: Chief, Bureau of Medicine and Surgery,
Department of the Navy
Washington, D.C. 20372

Subj: Course of instruction in aerospace medicine; request for

1. It is requested that I be considered for a course of instruction in aerospace medicine.
2. If approved for this course of instruction, I agree to remain a minimum of two years in an operational assignment after completion of this course.

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