Jean Palfyn Encyclopedia Article

Jean Palfyn

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1650-1730

French physician who was the first to use forceps to facilitate childbirth. At a time when physicians were often banned from childbirth, there were few implements or tools available to aid the mother in delivering difficult babies. Palfyn's introduction of forceps, which continue to be used to this day, was the first such device. By helping the physician or midwife ease the baby through the birth canal, the use of forceps helped make childbirth a little better for both mother and child.