John Abernethy Encyclopedia Article

John Abernethy

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John Abernethy

1764-1831

English surgeon who founded the school of surgery and anatomy at St. Bartholomew's Hospital in London. His lectures there on anatomy helped to train many other surgeons. Abernethy was one of the first surgeons to treat aneurysms (bulges in the wall of an artery) by tying off the artery with a ligature (a piece of thread or wire). In addition, Abernethy developed a new technique for the treatment of aneurysms in very large arteries. It involved using multiple ligatures spaced about 1 in (2.5 cm) apart.