Samuel Siegfried Carl Von Basch Encyclopedia Article

Samuel Siegfried Carl Von Basch

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Contents

Samuel Siegfried Carl Von Basch Encyclopedia Article.....1

Contents.....2

Samuel Siegfried Carl Von Basch.....3

Samuel Siegfried Carl Von Basch

1837-1905

Czech-Austrian physician who developed the first device for measuring blood pressure without cutting a blood vessel. Working in Leipzig and Berlin with other gifted physiologists, Basch became interested in the workings of the heart and blood. In 1876 he designed a small bulb with a balloon-like diaphragm stretched across the bottom that connected to a manometer, an instrument for measuring the pressure of gases and liquids. The diaphragm pressed on the artery until the pulse stopped and at this point indicated pressure. Though not accurate compared to modern instruments, the idea of the sphygmomanometer for measuring blood pressure without an invasive procedure was a medical breakthrough.