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Colon-Morales' Uterine Displacement Device



When a pregnant woman lies flat on her back, the heavy contents of her distended womb can compress one or both of her abdomen's largest blood vessels (inferior vena cava and/or aorta). Besides alarming symptoms, maternal hypotension and even fetal demise can then occur. To help prevent this "supine hypotensive syndrome," Dr. Miguel A. Colon-Morales invented a uterine displacement device (above), which can be attached to (or slid under the padding of) the surgical table. To shift the gravid uterus to the patient's left and avoid compressing central vessels, a 10-inch rod is extended so that its terminal plunger ball is "placed in the space between the last floating rib and the right iliac crest." On June, 13, 1972, Dr. Colon-Morales was granted U.S. Patent No. 3669118 for his clever "Uterine Displacement Device." (Copyright © the American Society of Anesthesiologists, Inc.)

George S. Bause, M.D., M.P.H., *Honorary Curator, ASA's Wood Library-Museum of Anesthesiology, Park Ridge, Illinois, and Clinical Associate Professor, Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland, Ohio.* UJYC@aol.com.