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CPAP or CPP?

To the Editor:—Slinger *et al.*¹ have applied continuous positive airway pressure (CPAP) to the non-dependent lung during one-lung ventilation for thoracic surgery, and found an improvement in arterial oxygenation. Their method of application of CPAP was very unique and effective. I believe that the meaning of CPAP used

by authors in their article is continuous positive pressure applied to the non-dependent lung in order to maintain a static inflation during thoracic surgery. Since the definition of CPAP, which is a well-established entity, is continuous positive pressure applied to the patient who is breathing spontaneously,² the authors' choice of word CPAP may be confusing and, perhaps, incorrect. Would continuous positive pressure (CPP) or prolonged positive airway pressure be the more appropriate term? There is a distinct difference in the airway pressure curve between CPAP and CPP (fig. 1). Although there is far from universal agreement on terminology used in respiratory care, it must have sound technical and physiological basis, and be clinically useful without confusion.

CHONG M. LEE, M.D.
Department of Anesthesiology
St. Elizabeth Hospital Medical Center
Youngstown, Ohio 44504

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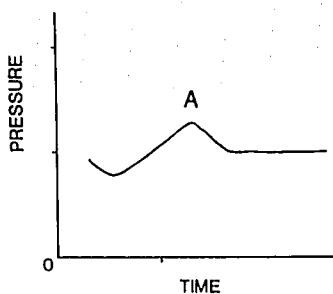
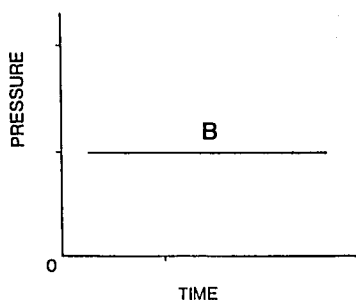


FIG. 1. Airway pressure curves. A. CPAP. B. CPP.



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In Reply:—Dr. Lee is correct that using the term CPAP to describe the current well-established practice of improving arterial oxygenation by positive pressure insufflation of oxygen to the non-ventilated lung during thoracic surgery may lead to some confusion, because CPAP was initially described for spontaneously breathing patients.

In a clinical study in 1980, Capan *et al.*¹ referred to "oxygen insufflation into the upper lung at 10 cm H₂O" during one-lung anesthesia and avoided using an acronym. In 1981, Alfery *et al.*² referred to this technique as "PEEP to the non-ventilated lung." In 1982, Benumof³ stated "a better term for this ventilatory pattern arrangement would be non-ventilated lung contin-