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Slippery Lexicon

To the Editor:—The title "Cardiogenic failure after isolated neurologic injury: a report of two cases" by Pousman and Parmley[1] caused this aging reader some anguish, realizing how slippery hath become our lexicon. Many years ago I learned about "cardiogenic shock," which I took to mean a state of diminished tissue perfusion and oxygenation caused by a gravely diminished output from the heart. I also learned about "cardiac failure," which I took to mean a faltering of the function of the organ that pumps blood. In all my years of reading *Anesthesiology,* however, I somehow missed learning about "cardiogenic failure." As I tried to understand this term, I found it so nonspecific as to be meaningless. "Failure" of WHAT? At face value, the term seems to mean failure of the creation of the heart itself!

Would "renogenic failure" ring true? Of course not—the term is "renal failure." Why must we continually aggrandize our verbiage when there are perfect *old* words to convey our meaning, no matter how old fashioned they might sound?

Christopher A. Mills, M.D.
Western States Anesthesia
Greeley, Colorado
camillsmd@home.com

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Minimizing the Cost of Monitoring $P_{ET}CO_2$ through a Clear Plastic Face Mask

To the Editor:—Continued pressure to minimize anesthesia costs inspired us to suggest a simple technique for monitoring exhaled carbon dioxide in patients spontaneously breathing oxygen through a clear plastic face mask. In the past, we have inserted an intravenous catheter with the needle removed through a hole in the side of the mask, so that the female hub of the intravenous catheter wedged into the side hole of the mask. However, the cost for each catheter was approximately $1.75 (14G 1-1/4″ Protectiv-Plus; Johnson & Johnson Medical, Arlington, TX). The same results can be obtained by using the cap from a syringe (Slip Tip Syringe; Becton Dickinson & Co., Franklin Lakes, NJ). The cap is removed from one of the many syringes used for a given patient. The closed tip of the cap is removed at an angle using scissors, and the cap is inserted into one of the face mask holes (See-Thru Oxygen Mask; Hudson Respiratory Care Inc., Temecula, CA). Because the cap is designed to mate with the male end of a syringe, it provides an ideal secure link to the male end of the capnograph sampling line.

Micheal A. Bogue, M.D.
Resident
Jonathan L. Benumof, M.D.
Professor
Department of Anesthesiology
University of California San Diego Medical Center
San Diego, California
jbenumof@ucsd.edu

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