

# George Magovern, US heart surgery pioneer, dies

November 7 2013

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Dr. George Magovern, a Pittsburgh cardiovascular surgeon who pioneered artificial heart valves, has died. He was 89.

Officials at Allegheny General Hospital, where Magovern introduced many of his cutting-edge techniques, say he died Monday.

The surgeon's son, Dr. George Magovern Jr., says his father is recognized for heart surgery techniques in the same way that Jonas Salk is recognized for his work with the [polio vaccine](#) and Thomas Starzl with [organ transplants](#). George Magovern Jr. is chief of thoracic and cardiovascular surgery at Allegheny Health Network, which includes the hospital where his father did his work.

The elder Magovern is best known for co-inventing a sutureless [heart valve](#), which was first used in 1962. The device reduced the time of such surgeries, increasing the odds that patients would survive.

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