



“Push-Pull Effect”

Aircrew Risk Awareness

Lt. Col (Dr.) Jeff “Bags” Woolford, MD, MPH, MBA
RAMS/USAF and NATO STO HFM-309 Technical Course
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Disclosure Information

I have no financial relationships to disclose.

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Overview



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- Public Release Information
- Anatomy
- Medical Formulas
- Push-Pull Effect Studies
- Current Preventive Measures
- Future Preventive Measures
- Questions?





Lt. Col (Dr.) Jeff “Bags” Woolford



EDUCATION

- 1995 Bachelor of Science in Professional Aeronautics, Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University, Daytona Beach, FL
- 2002 Squadron Officer School (Residence), Air University, Maxwell Air Force Base, AL
- 2004 White House Emergency Actions Course, White House Military Office, Washington, DC
- 2005 Bachelor of Science in Biology, University of Maryland – Baltimore County, Baltimore, MD
- 2008 Doctor of Medicine, Uniformed Services University, National Naval Medical Center, Bethesda, MD
- 2010 Air Command and Staff College (Correspondence), Air University, Maxwell Air Force Base, AL
- 2014 Master of Public Health from the Bloomberg School of Public Health, Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, MD
- 2016 Master of Business Administration from the Cary Business School, Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, MD
- 2017 Air War College (Correspondence), Air University, Maxwell Air Force Base, AL

ASSIGNMENTS

- 08/1989 – 09/1989 Student, Basic Military Training, Lackland AFB, TX
- 09/1989 – 11/1989 Student, Apprentice Tactical Aircraft Maintenance (F-16), Sheppard AFB, TX
- 11/1989 – 01/1990 Student, Aircraft Maintenance Specialist (F-16 Crew Chief), Shaw AFB, SC
- 01/1990 – 03/1992 Aircraft Mechanic (F-16C), Ramstein AB, Germany
- 03/1992 – 12/1992 Aircraft Mechanic (F-16C), Mountain Home AFB, ID
- 01/1993 – 03/1997 Aircraft Mechanic (A-10A), Warfield ANGB, MD
- 03/1997 – 05/1997 Student, Academy of Military Science, McGehee-Tyson ANGB, TN
- 05/1997 – 07/1998 Student, Specialized Undergraduate Pilot Training, Laughlin AFB, TX
- 08/1998 – 09/1998 Student, Introduction to Fighter Fundamentals Course, Columbus AFB, MS
- 09/1998 – 03/1999 Student, A-10 Pilot Initial Qualification Course, Davis-Monthan AFB, AZ
- 03/1999 – 08/2004 A-10A Aircraft Commander, Warfield ANGB, MD
- 08/2004 – 09/2008 Medical Student, Uniformed Services University, Bethesda, MD
- 09/2008 – 10/2009 Transitional Intern, Wilford Hall Medical Center, Lackland AFB, TX
- 11/2009 – 11/2010 Flight Surgeon / Squadron Medical Element, Osan AB, Korea
- 11/2010 – 05/2013 A-10C Pilot-Physician / Squadron Medical Element, Spangdahlem AB, Germany
- 05/2013 – 07/2014 Student, Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, MD
- 07/2014 – 07/2016 Resident of Aerospace Medicine, Wright-Patterson AFB, OH
- 07/2016 – Present USAF-RAF Exchange Officer/Pilot-Physician, MoD Boscombe Down, United Kingdom









Public Release Information



- Inverted flight duration ≈ 22 seconds @ $\leq -2G$
- Range from $-2.06G$ to $+8.56G = \Delta 10.62G$





Operational Relevance?



- “Push-Pull” Maneuvers were associated with:
 - 31.3% of G-LOC events in the Royal Air Force
 - 29.0% of G-LOC events in the United States Air Force



Frequency of the “Push-Pull Effect” in U.S. Air Force Fighter Operations Study



The purpose of this study was to determine the frequency of maneuvers found to cause the push-pull effect in U.S. Air Force fighter aircraft.



Frequency of the “Push-Pull Effect” in U.S. Air Force Fighter Operations Study



TABLE II. PERCENTAGE OF ENGAGEMENTS WITH PUSH-PULL EFFECT MANEUVERS BY TYPE OF SORTIE, PILOT STATUS, AND AIRCRAFT TYPE.

Sortie Type	Pilot Status	F-16	F-15	Aircraft Combined (%)
BFM	Student	11/30 (37%)	7/43 (16%)	25
BFM	Instructor	3/28 (11%)	5/35 (14%)	13
ACM	Student	18/42 (43%)	16/24 (67%)	51
ACM	Instructor	12/32 (38%)	5/8 (63%)	43
Aircraft totals		44/132 (33%)	33/110 (30%)	32



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Frequency of the “Push-Pull Effect” in U.S. Air Force Fighter Operations Results



- Push-Pull Effect maneuvers were found with an overall average of 32%, ranging from 11% to 67% depending on the nature of the training mission.
- The Push-Pull Effect maneuvers observed contained segments of less than +1Gz, ranging on average from 0.00Gz to +0.5Gz for an average of 3.5 to 5.0 seconds.



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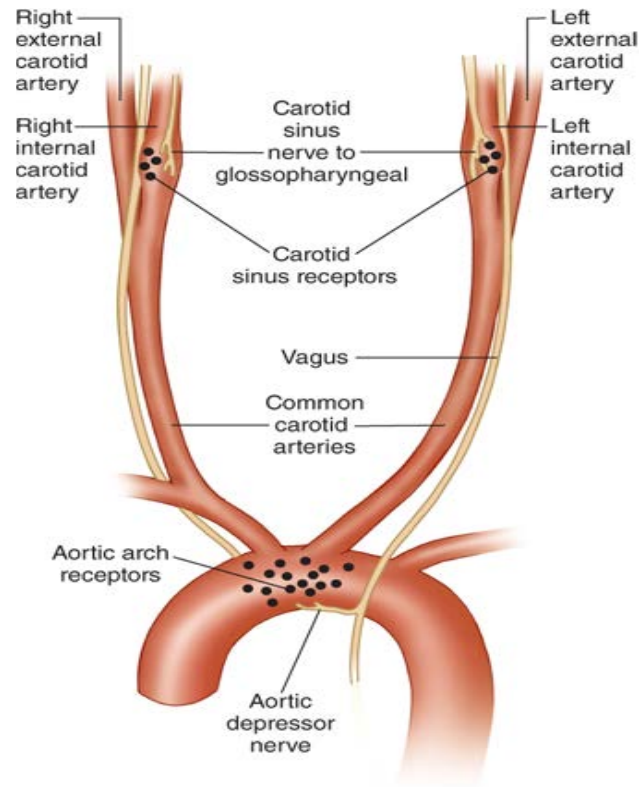
Frequency of the “Push-Pull Effect” in U.S. Air Force Fighter Operations Results



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- The Push-Pull Effect maneuvers observed contained segments of **less than +1Gz**, ranging on average from 0.00Gz to +0.5Gz **for an average of 3.5 to 5.0 seconds**.
- **CONCLUSION:** Data from 240 HUD tapes containing over 240 air combat training engagements from F-15 and F-16 aircraft reveal that **push-pull maneuvers are most frequently, unintentionally, performed when entering the merge head-on**, when “re-entering the fight”, and when executing an offensive role.



Anatomy





Medical Formulas

$$CO = SV \cdot HR$$

Cardiac Output = Stroke Volume x Heart Rate

$$MAP = \frac{(SBP - DBP)}{3} + DBP$$

Mean Arterial Pressure = 1/3 (Systolic BP – Diastolic BP) + Diastolic BP

$$CPP = MAP - ICP$$

Cerebral Perfusion Pressure = Mean Arterial Pressure – Intracranial Pressure



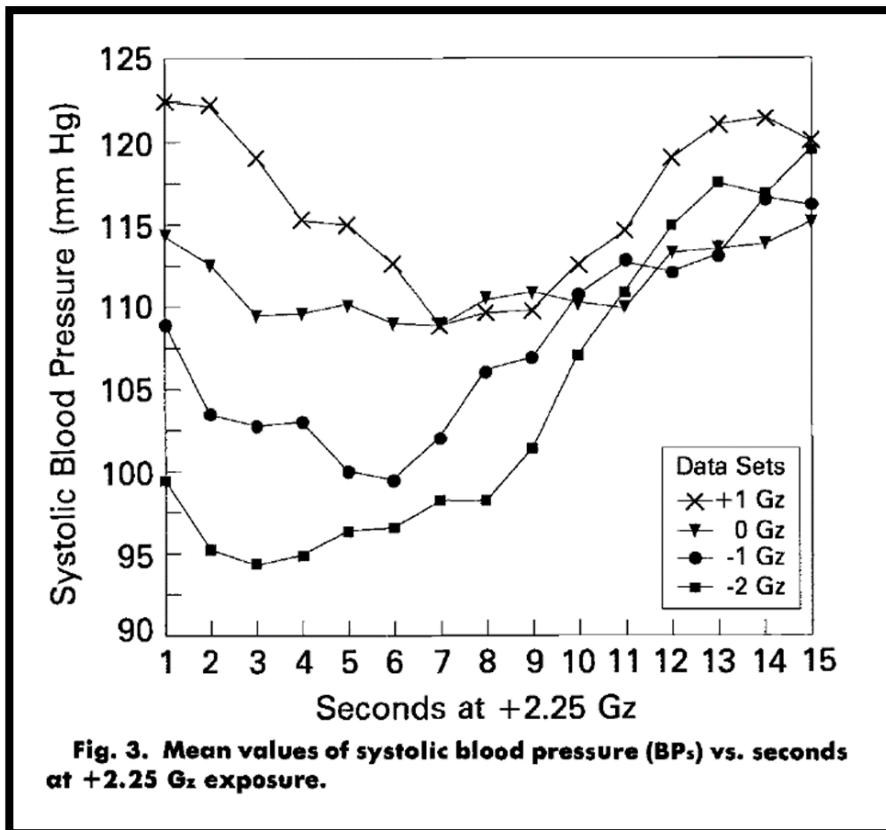
The “Push-Pull Effect” Study



The purpose of this study was to prove or refute previous authors' suggestions that tolerance to $+G_z$ is reduced when preceded by $0G_z$ or $-G_z$.

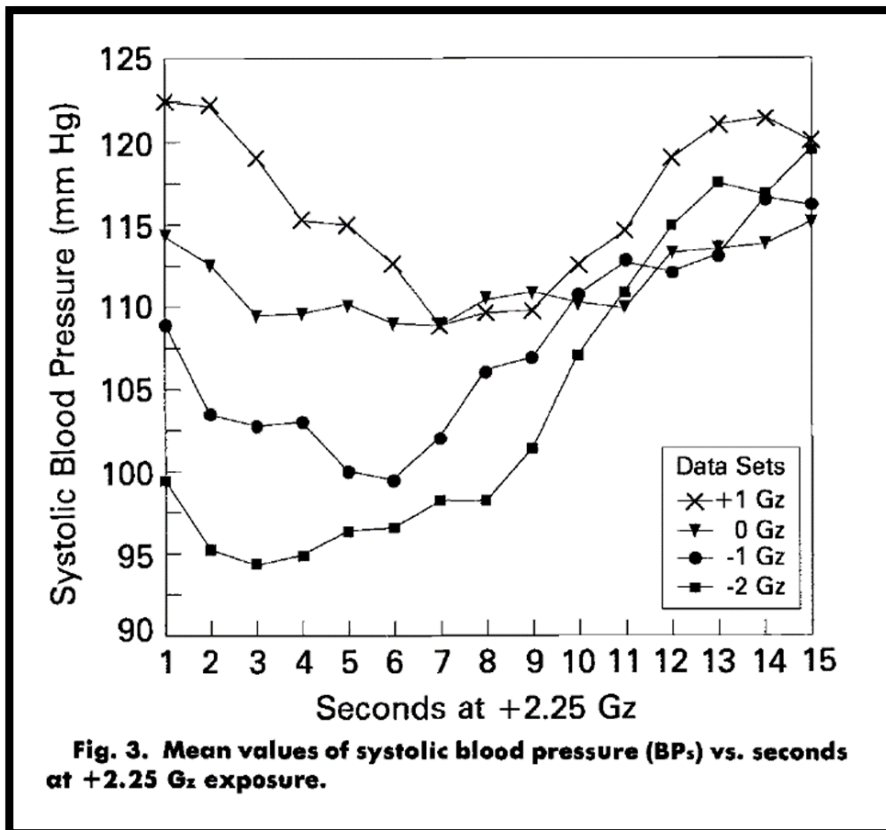


Systolic Blood Pressure vs. +2.25 G_z





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Systolic Blood Pressure vs. +2.25 G_z

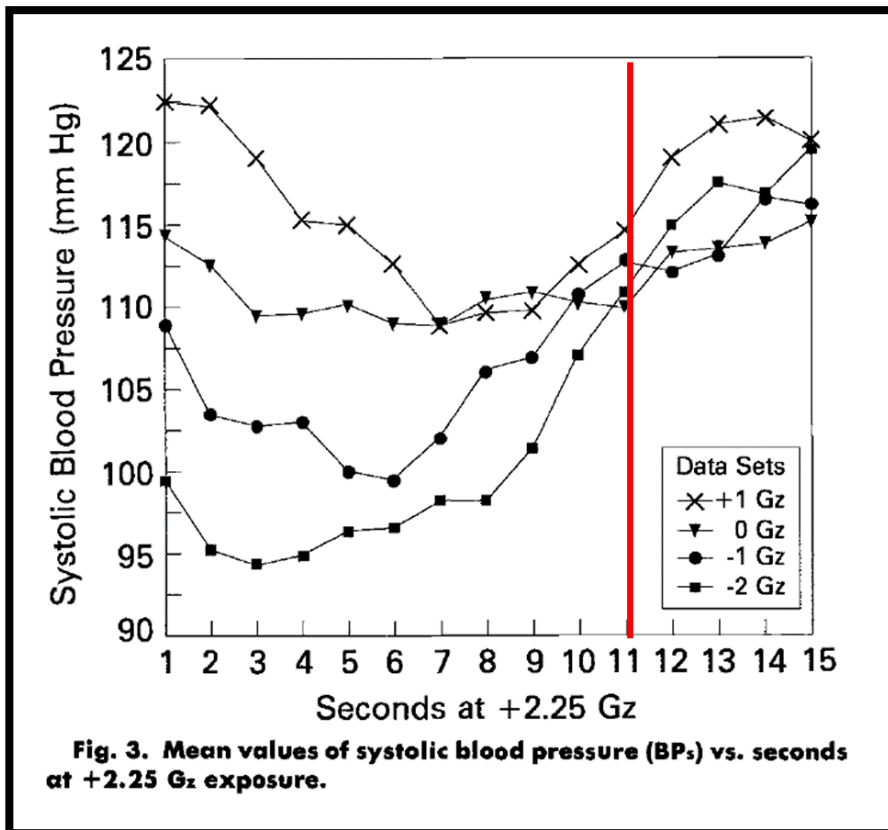
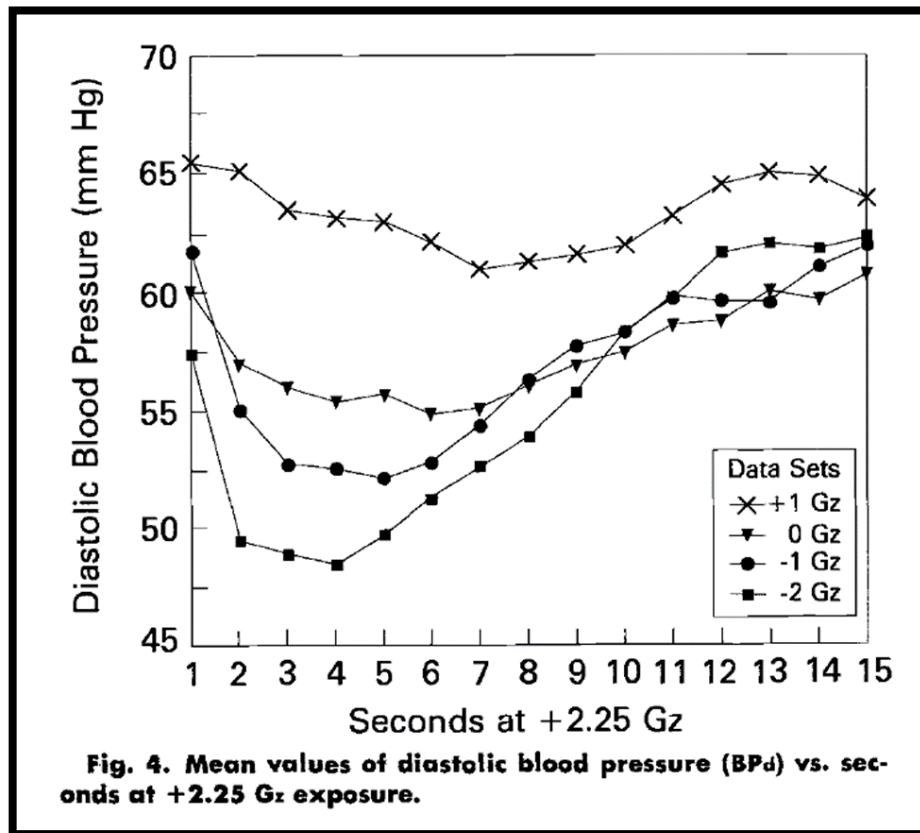


Fig. 3. Mean values of systolic blood pressure (BP_s) vs. seconds at +2.25 G_z exposure.

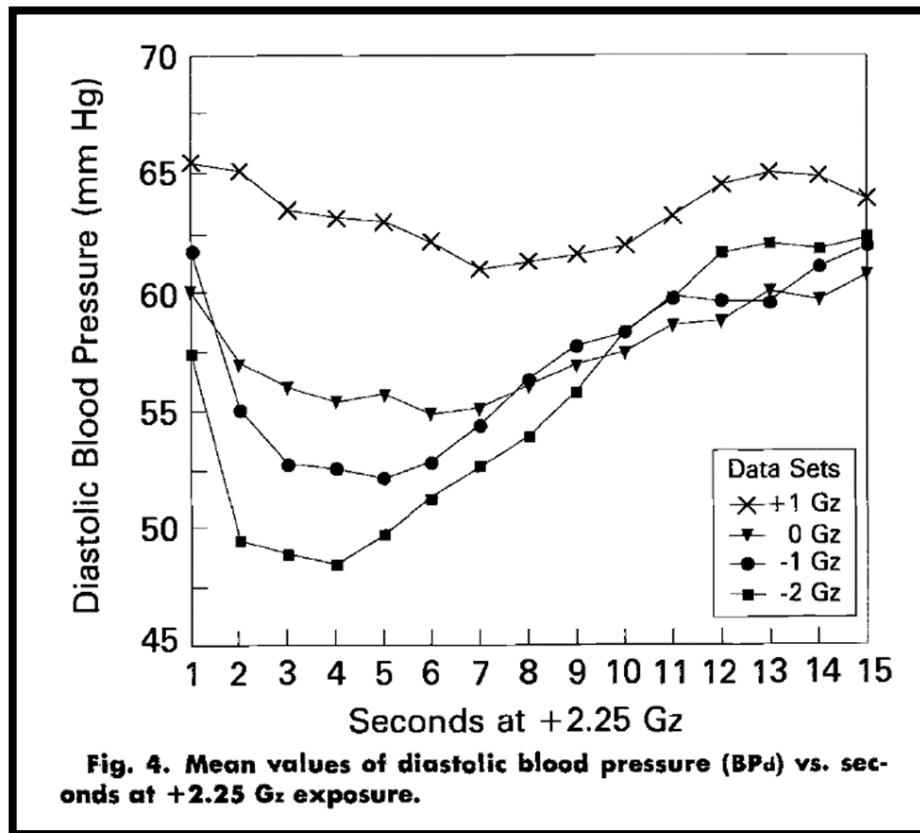


Diastolic Blood Pressure vs. +2.25 G_z



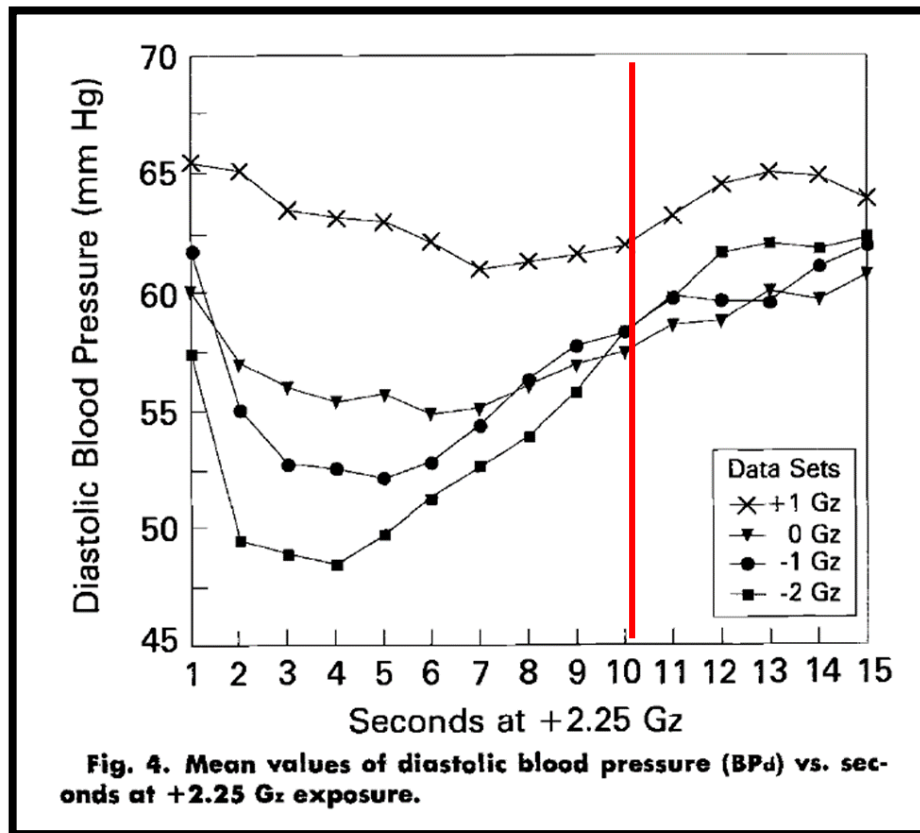


Diastolic Blood Pressure vs. +2.25 G_z



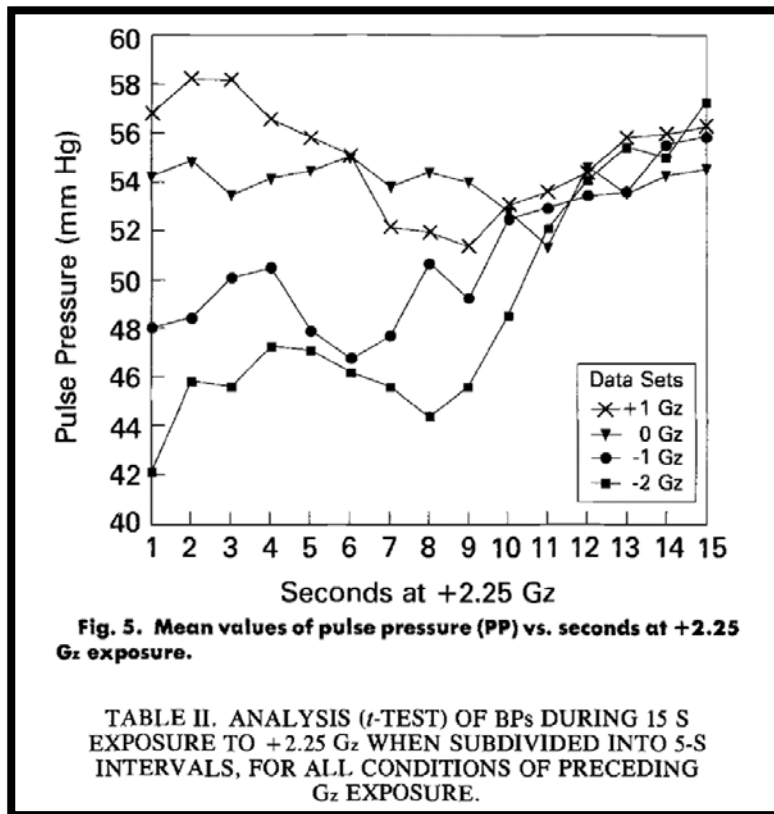


Diastolic Blood Pressure vs. +2.25 G_z



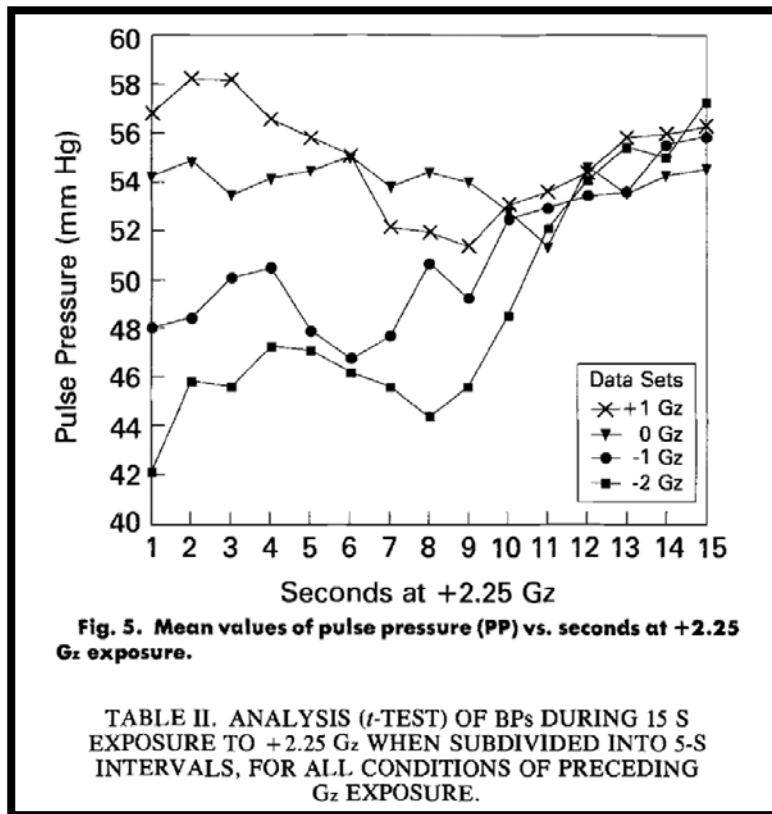


Mean Pulse Pressure vs. +2.25 G_z





Mean Pulse Pressure vs. +2.25 G_z





Mean Pulse Pressure vs. +2.25 G_z

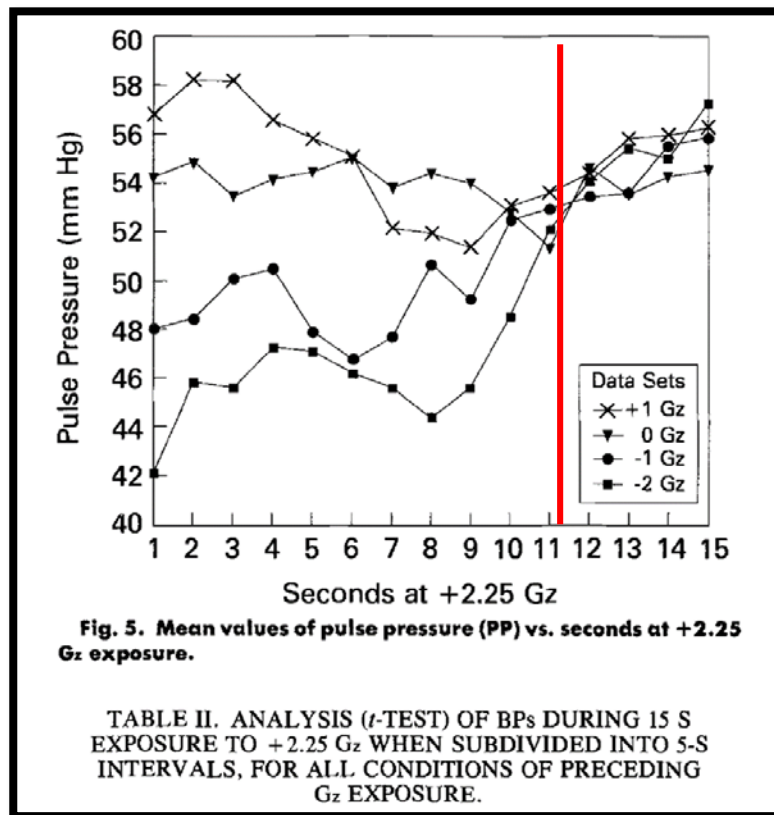


Fig. 5. Mean values of pulse pressure (PP) vs. seconds at +2.25 Gz exposure.

TABLE II. ANALYSIS (*t*-TEST) OF BPs DURING 15 S EXPOSURE TO +2.25 Gz WHEN SUBDIVIDED INTO 5-S INTERVALS, FOR ALL CONDITIONS OF PRECEDING Gz EXPOSURE.



The “Push-Pull Effect” Results



- The minimum blood pressure was progressively lower during the 15 second period as the pre-exposure experimental conditions became more negative (+1, 0, -1, and -2G_z).
- Episodes of peripheral vision loss increased as the preceding -G_z became more negative.



The “Push-Pull Effect” Results



- The **minimum blood pressure was progressively lower** during the 15 second period **as the pre-exposure experimental conditions became more negative (+1, 0, -1, and -2G_z)**.
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The “Push-Pull Effect” Results



- The **minimum blood pressure was progressively lower** during the 15 second period **as the pre-exposure experimental conditions became more negative (+1, 0, -1, and -2G_z)**.
- Episodes of peripheral vision loss increased as the preceding -G_z became more negative.
- **CONCLUSION: Blood pressure during exposure to +G_z was significantly affected by the preceding 10 second exposure to -G_z**, and is indicative of reduced +G_z tolerance.



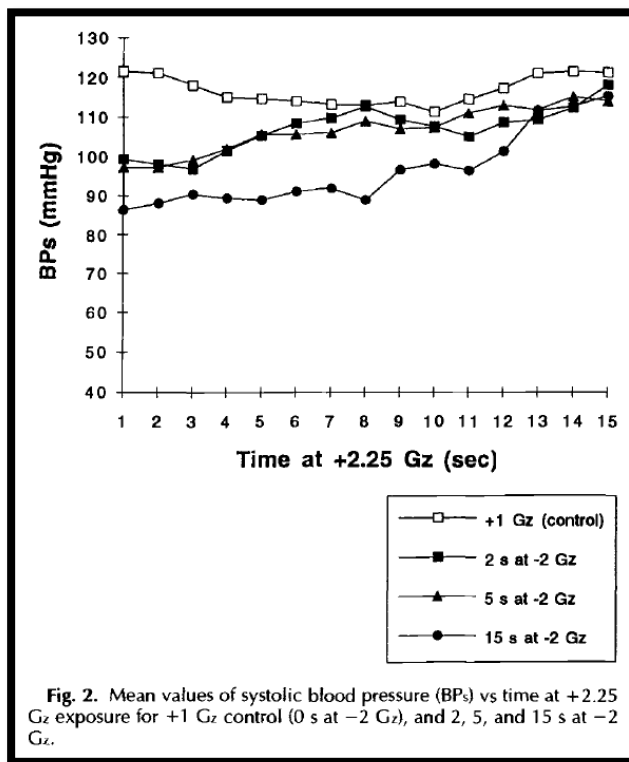
The Effect of Varying Time at $-G_z$ on Subsequent $+G_z$ Physiological Tolerance (Push-Pull Effect) Study



The purpose of this experiment was to observe
the effect of varying time duration at $-G_z$ on
the push-pull effect.

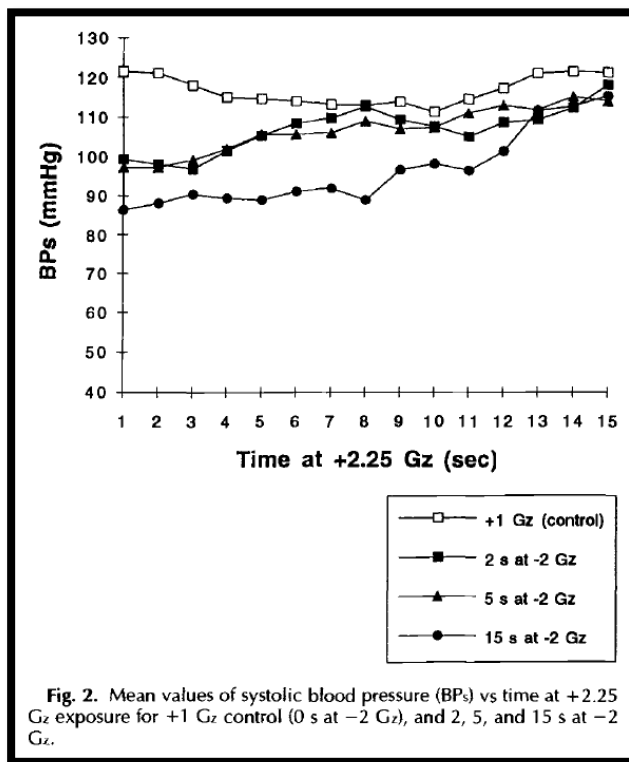


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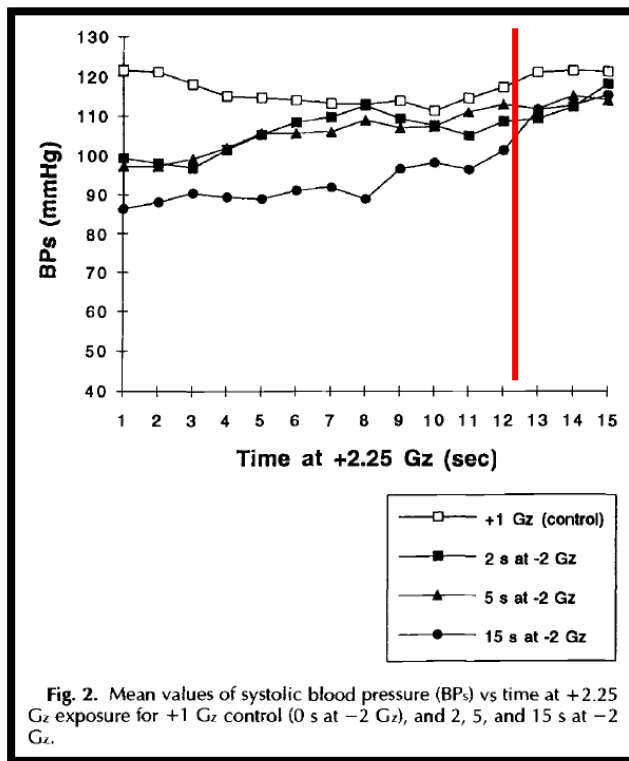
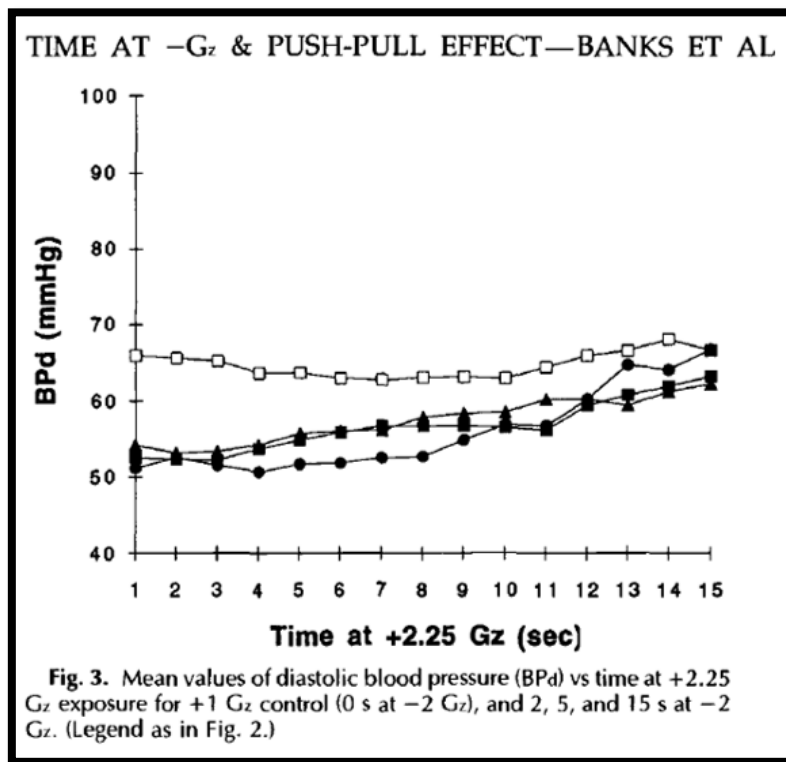


Fig. 2. Mean values of systolic blood pressure (BPs) vs time at +2.25 G_z exposure for +1 G_z control (0 s at -2 G_z), and 2, 5, and 15 s at -2 G_z.

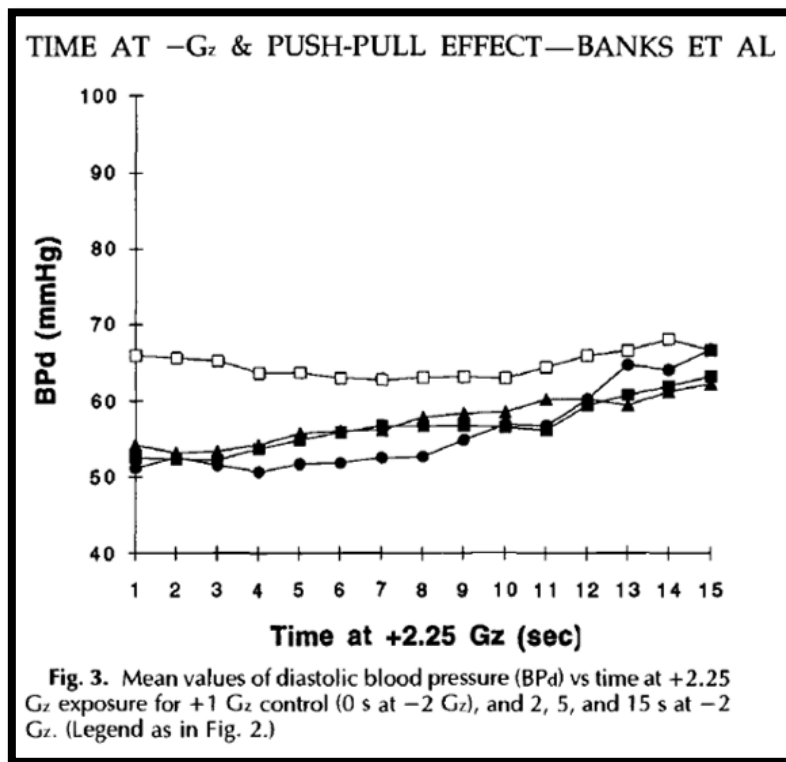


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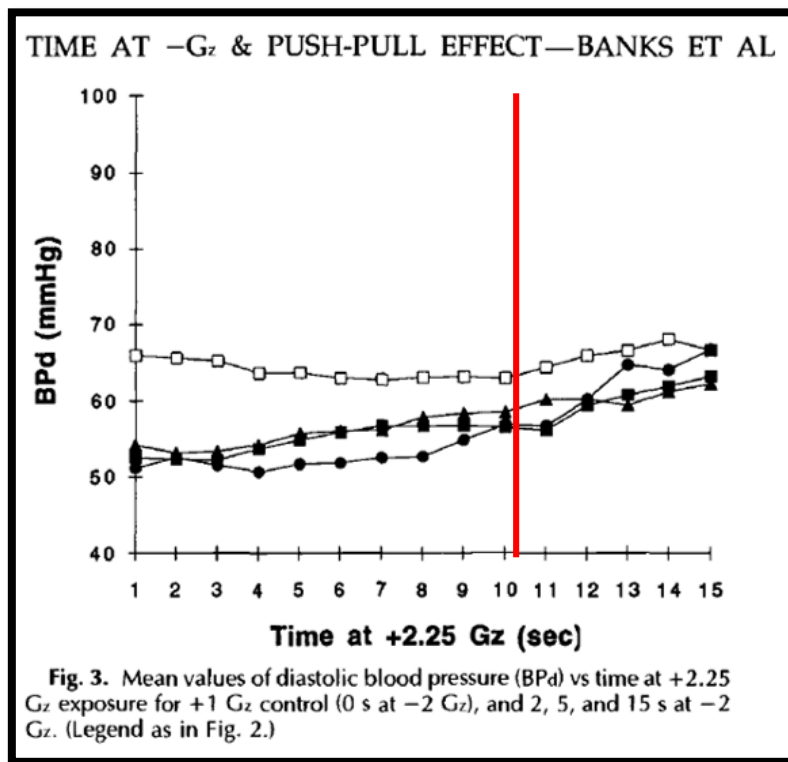


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Pulse Pressure vs. Time at +2.25 G_z

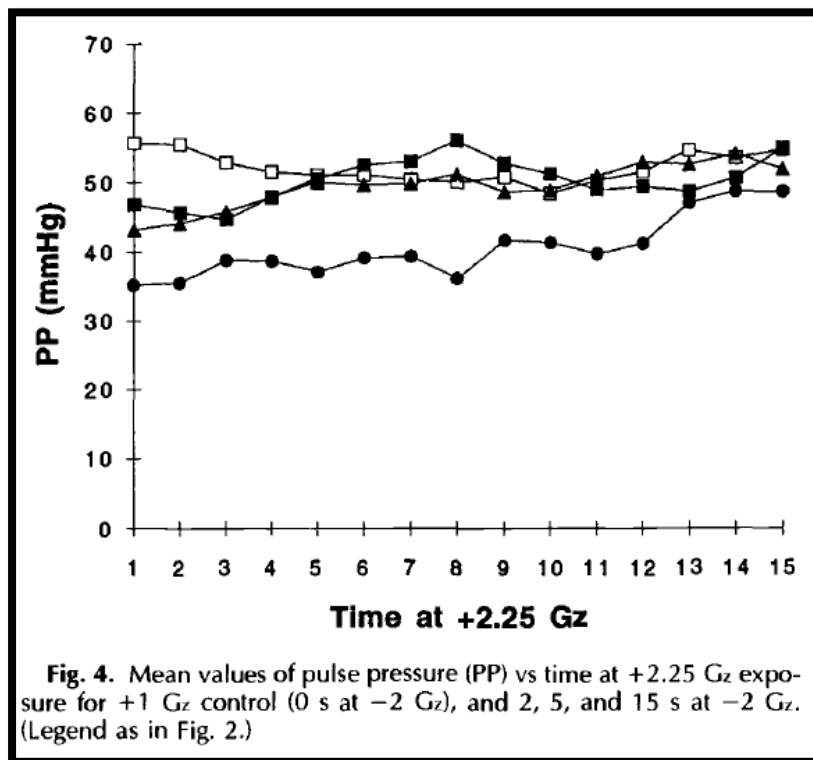


Fig. 4. Mean values of pulse pressure (PP) vs time at +2.25 G_z exposure for +1 G_z control (0 s at -2 G_z), and 2, 5, and 15 s at -2 G_z. (Legend as in Fig. 2.)



Pulse Pressure vs. Time at +2.25 G_z

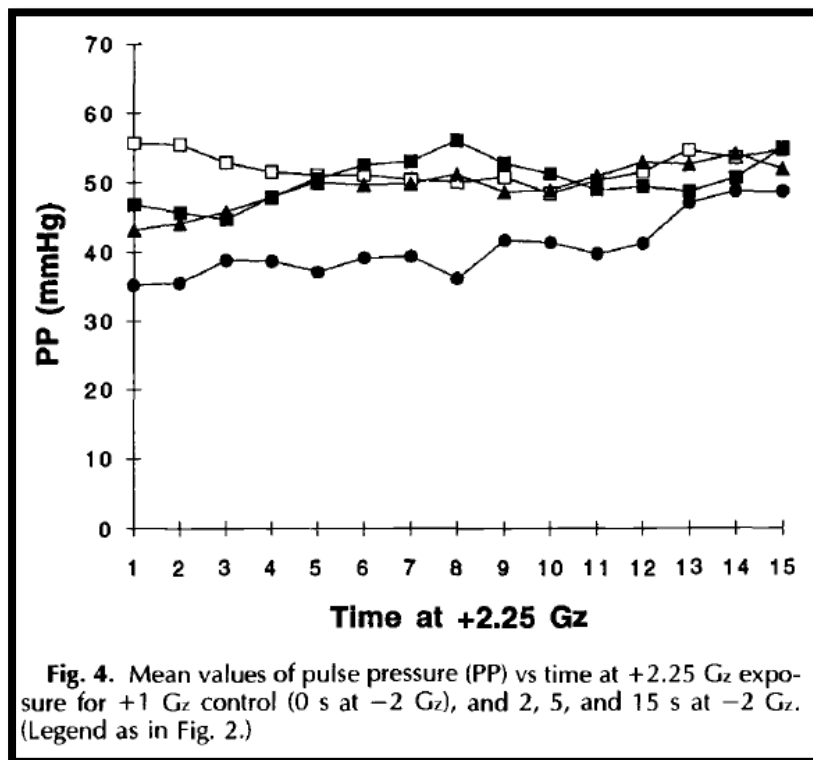


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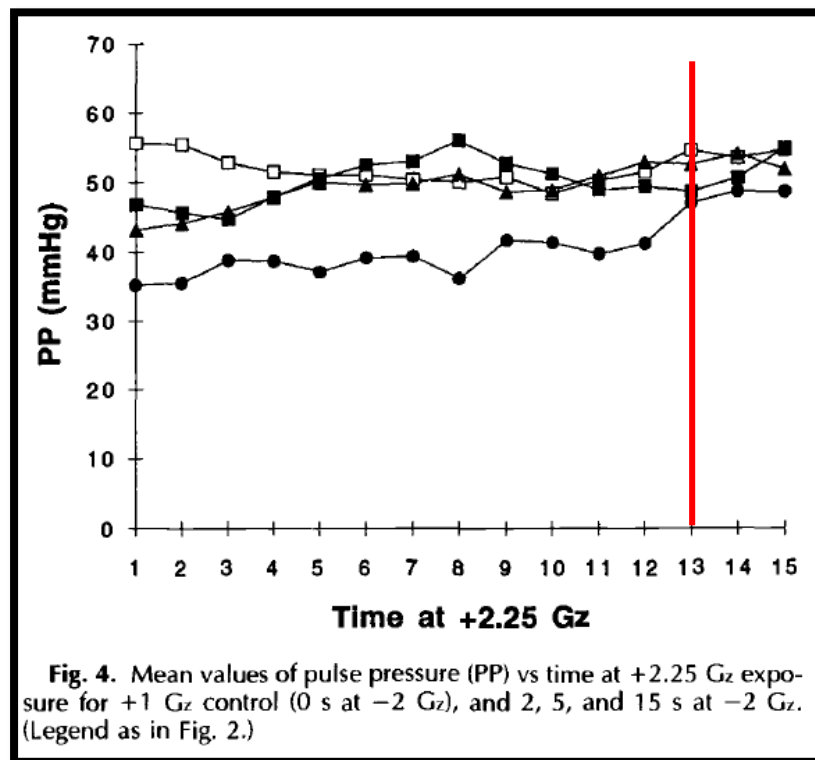


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The Effect of Varying Time at $-G_z$ on Subsequent $+G_z$ Physiological Tolerance (Push-Pull Effect) Results



- Mean blood pressure was significantly reduced when the $+2.25G_z$ exposures were preceded by $-2G_z$.
- Following 15 seconds of $-2G_z$, mean blood pressure decreased more and was slower to recover than for 2 and 5 seconds of $-2G_z$.



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- Mean **blood pressure** was significantly **reduced** when the **$+2.25G_z$** exposures were preceded by **$-2G_z$** .
- Following **15 seconds of $-2G_z$** , mean **blood pressure** decreased more and was **slower to recover** than for **2 and 5 seconds of $-2G_z$** .



The Effect of Varying Time at $-G_z$ on Subsequent $+G_z$ Physiological Tolerance (Push-Pull Effect) Results



- Mean **blood pressure** was significantly **reduced** when the **$+2.25G_z$** exposures were preceded by **$-2G_z$** .
- Following **15 seconds** of **$-2G_z$** , mean **blood pressure** decreased more and was **slower to recover** than for **2 and 5 seconds** of **$-2G_z$** .
- **CONCLUSION:** During relaxed conditions, **the push-pull effect is augmented** by increasing duration of the preceding **$-G_z$** .



Extrapolation?



The "Push-Pull Effect" Study

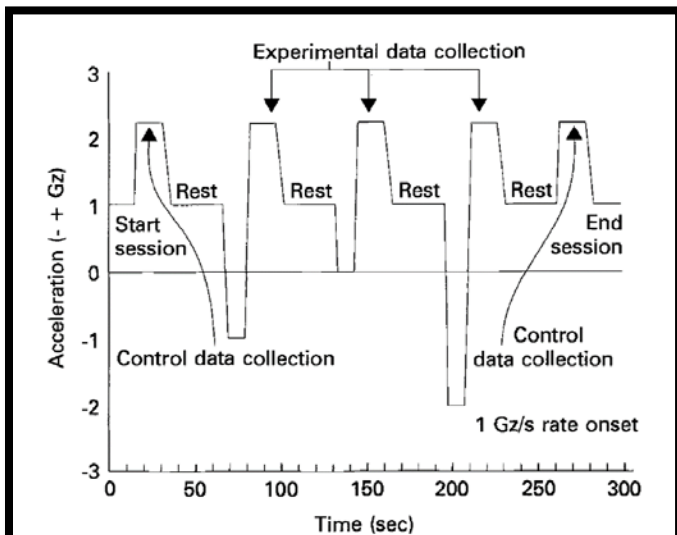


Fig. 2. Typical G_z exposure profile for one session showing 2 control and 3 experimental segments, each separated by a 30-s rest period at +1 G_z . BP data were collected at 15-s periods of exposure to +2.25 G_z for each condition, as indicated.

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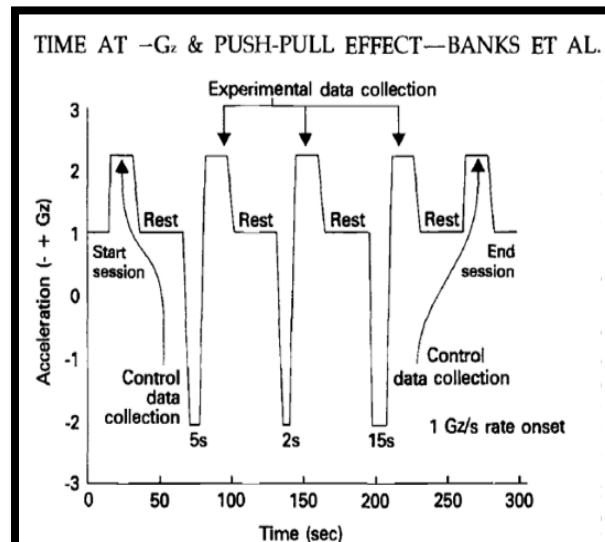
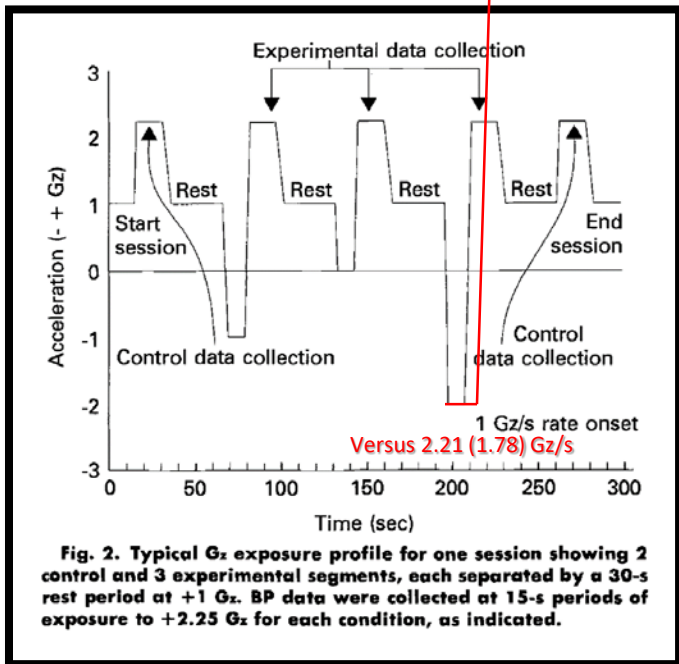


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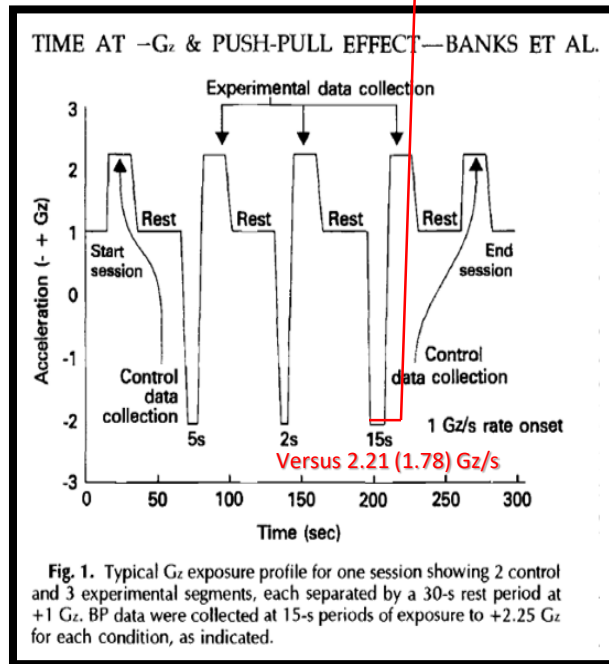


Limited Release Information

The "Push-Pull Effect" Study

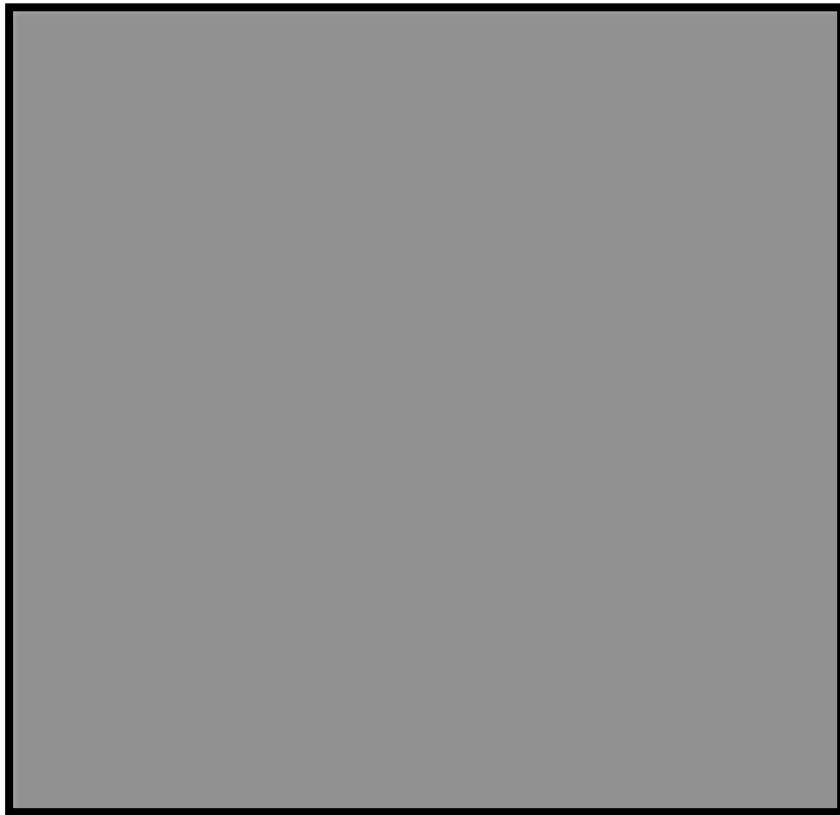


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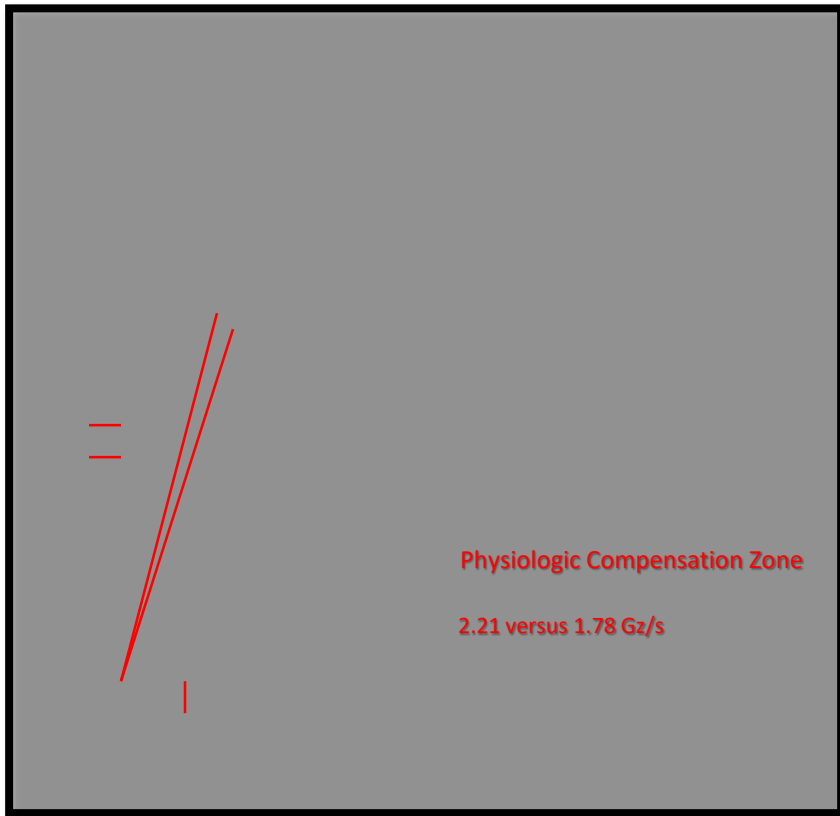


"Stoll Curve" G-Tolerance vs. Acceleration Rates





Limited Release Information





Blood Pressure and Heart Rate Responses to Sudden Changes of Gravity During Exercise Study



The purpose of this study was to propose an experimental model, involving sudden gravitational stress superimposed on dynamic exercise, that would provide new information regarding the efficiency of circulatory control (or lack thereof) to maintain blood pressure and blood perfusion under conditions of increased metabolic requirements.



Blood Pressure and Heart Rate Responses to Sudden Changes of Gravity During Exercise Study

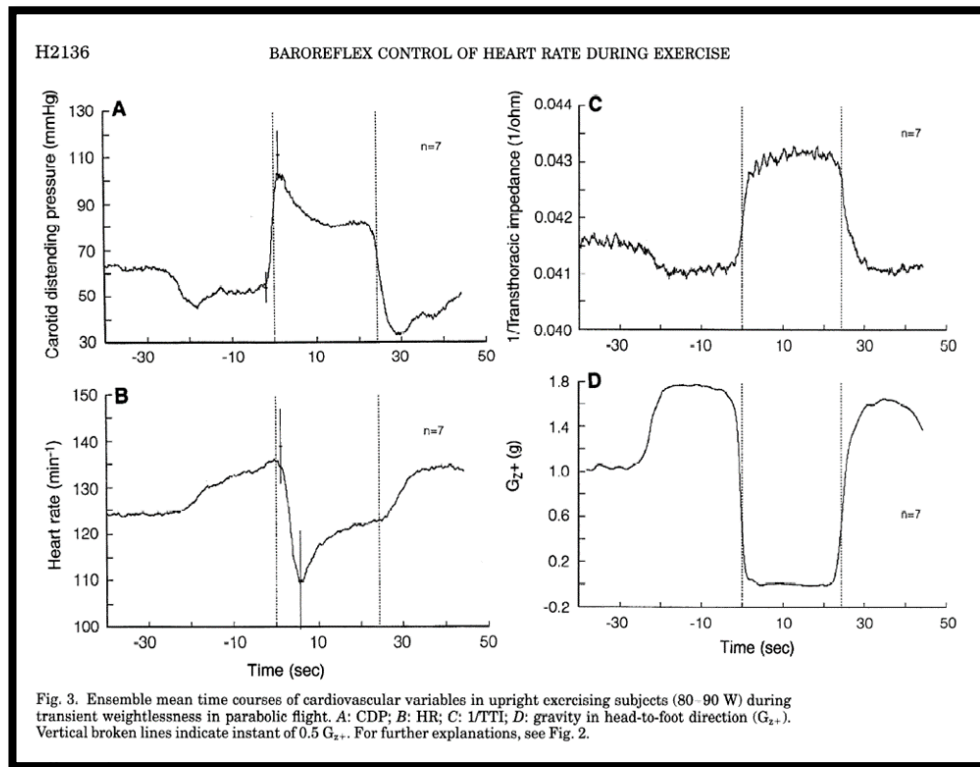


Fig. 3. Ensemble mean time courses of cardiovascular variables in upright exercising subjects (80-90 W) during transient weightlessness in parabolic flight. A: CDP; B: HR; C: 1/TTI; D: gravity in head-to-foot direction (G_{z+}). Vertical broken lines indicate instant of $0.5 G_{z+}$. For further explanations, see Fig. 2.



Blood Pressure and Heart Rate Responses to Sudden Changes of Gravity During Exercise Results



- Heart rate responses are described as a function of carotid distending pressure and the inverse of transthoracic impedance after a time delay of 2.3 to 3.0 seconds.
- Time constants of 0.34 to 0.35 seconds for decreasing heart rate.
- Time constants of 2.9 to 4.6 seconds for increasing heart rate.
- The carotid-cardiac baroreflex ... accounts for 85 to 95% of the initial heart rate responses to sudden changes of gravity.



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- The carotid-cardiac baroreflex ... accounts for 85 to 95% of the initial heart rate responses to sudden changes of gravity.
- **CONCLUSION: Heart rate increases occur much more slowly than heart rate decreases.**



Role of Autonomic Nervous System in Push-Pull Gravitational Stress in Anesthetized Rats Study



The purpose of this study was to investigate the integrative response of the autonomic nervous system by studying responses to gravitational stress before and after autonomic function was inhibited by hexamethonium in 10 isoflourane-anesthetized ... Sprague-Dawley rats.



Role of Autonomic Nervous System in Push-Pull Gravitational Stress in Anesthetized Rats Study

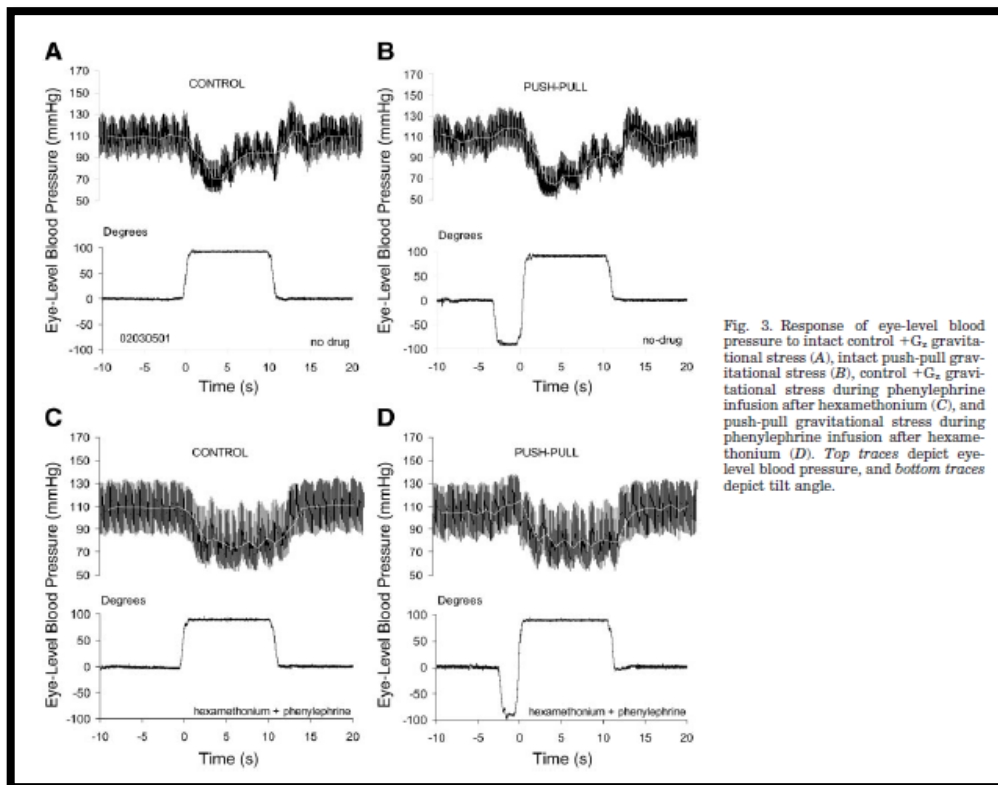


Fig. 3. Response of eye-level blood pressure to intact control +G_z gravitational stress (A), intact push-pull gravitational stress (B), control +G_z gravitational stress during phenylephrine infusion after hexamethonium (C), and push-pull gravitational stress during phenylephrine infusion after hexamethonium (D). Top traces depict eye-level blood pressure, and bottom traces depict tilt angle.



Role of Autonomic Nervous System in Push-Pull Gravitational Stress in Anesthetized Rats Results



- The push-pull effect is abolished when autonomic ganglionic neurotransmission is inhibited.
- Substantially lowering or raising baseline arterial blood pressure also abolished the push-pull effect, probably by disrupting baroreflex function .



Role of Autonomic Nervous System in Push-Pull Gravitational Stress in Anesthetized Rats Results



- The push-pull effect is **abolished** when **autonomic ganglionic neurotransmission** is inhibited.
- Substantially lowering or raising baseline arterial blood pressure also abolished the push-pull effect, probably by disrupting baroreflex function .
- **CONCLUSION: Intact autonomic function and a normal baseline arterial pressure are needed for expression of the push-pull effect** in anesthetized rats subject to tilting.



Role of Autonomic Nervous System in Push-Pull Gravitational Stress in Anesthetized Rats Results



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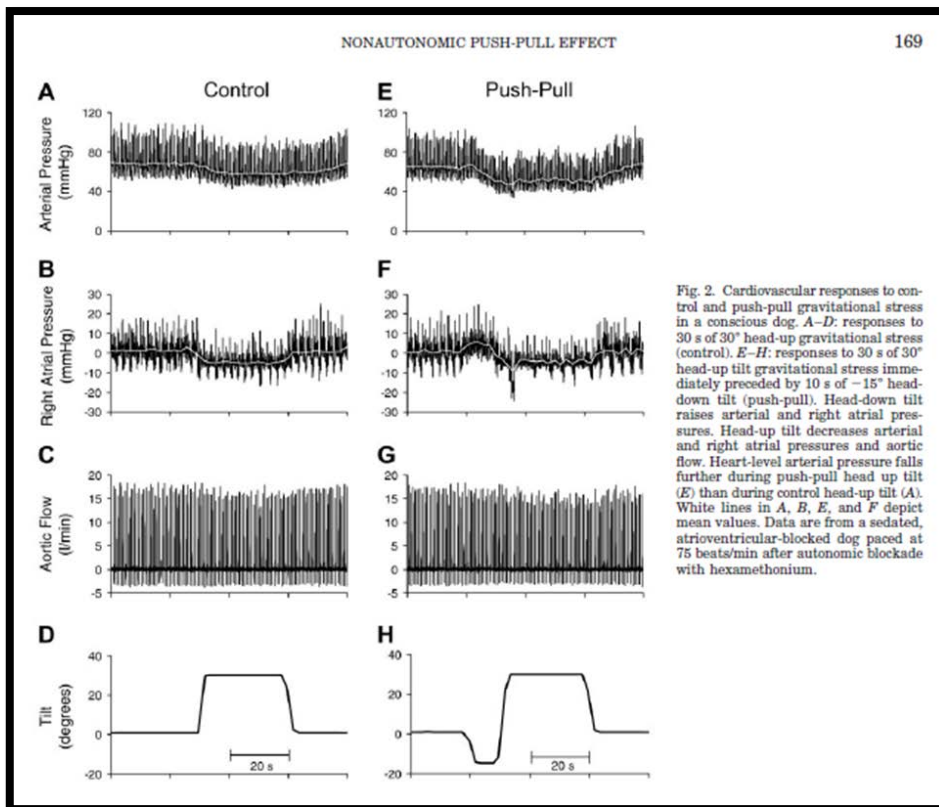
Hypotensive Effect of Push-Pull Gravitational Stress Occurs after Autonomic Blockade Study



The purpose of this study was to test the hypothesis that non-autonomic mechanisms can cause a push-pull effect, by using eye-level blood pressure as a measure of G tolerance.



Hypotensive Effect of Push-Pull Gravitational Stress Occurs after Autonomic Blockade Study





Hypotensive Effect of Push-Pull Gravitational Stress Occurs after Autonomic Blockade Results



- A push-pull effect attributable to peripheral vascular factors occurs in conscious dogs after autonomic blockade.
- In addition to the autonomic factors, the non-autonomic factors appear to contribute importantly to the push-pull effect in relatively large species such as dogs and humans.



Hypotensive Effect of Push-Pull Gravitational Stress Occurs after Autonomic Blockade Results



- A push-pull **effect attributable to peripheral vascular factors** occurs in conscious dogs after autonomic blockade.
- In addition to the autonomic factors, the non-autonomic factors appear to contribute importantly to the push-pull effect **in relatively large species** such as dogs and humans.
- **CONCLUSION:** A **push-pull effect** attributable to at total rise in vascular conductance **occurs when autonomic function is inhibited.**



Enhanced Parasympathetic Tone Signal Cascade

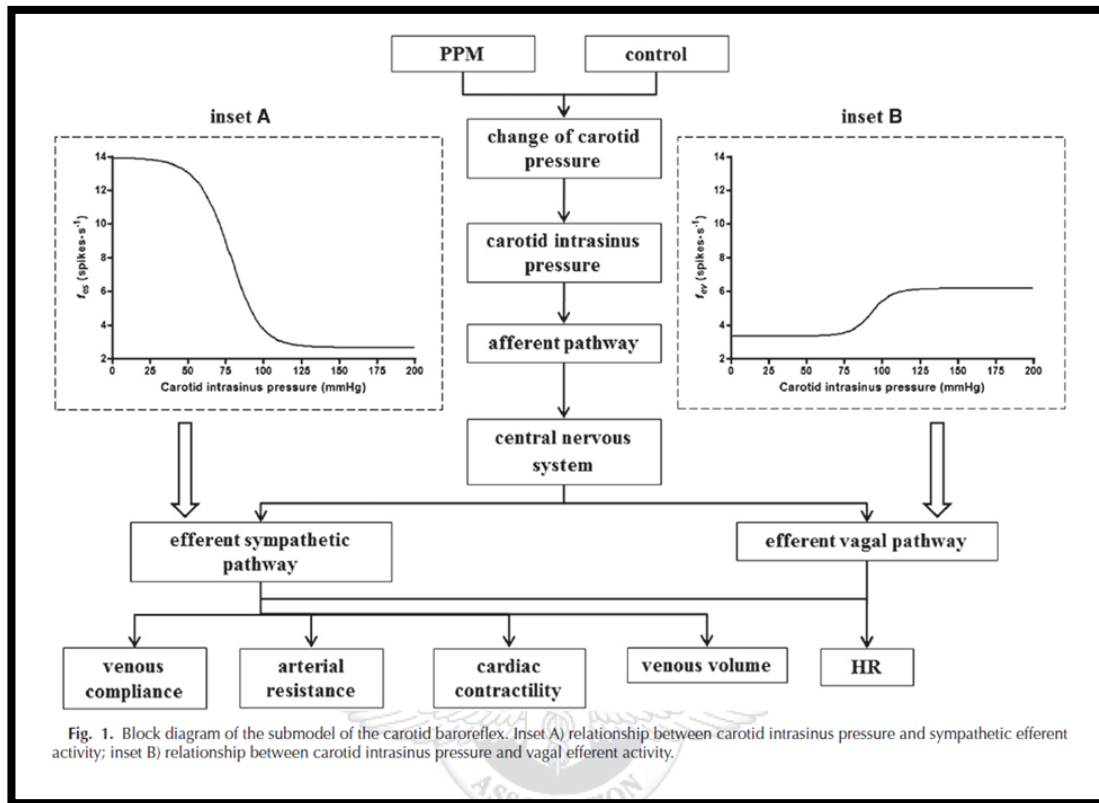


Fig. 1. Block diagram of the submodel of the carotid baroreflex. Inset A) relationship between carotid intrasinus pressure and sympathetic efferent activity; inset B) relationship between carotid intrasinus pressure and vagal efferent activity.



Tachycardic Heart Rate @ +6G Centrifuge





“Bunt Bradycardia” Study Discussion



Increased parasympathetic nervous-system activity results in bradycardia, peripheral vasodilation and decreased cardiac contractility. Because the demands of +G stress require increased cardiac output through increased heartrate and stroke volume, as well as increased vasoconstriction, a pilot may be physiologically biased against full +G acceleration tolerance following –G stress.



“Bunt Bradycardia” Study Discussion

Increased parasympathetic nervous-system activity results in bradycardia, peripheral vasodilation and decreased cardiac contractility. Because the demands of +G stress require increased cardiac output through increased heartrate and stroke volume, as well as increased vasoconstriction, **a pilot may be physiologically biased against full +G acceleration tolerance following –G stress.**

$$CO = SV \cdot HR$$

∴ **HR** must ↑ to meet demand ...



HR Effect of MAP



$$\text{MAP} \simeq \text{DP} + 0.01 \times \exp(4.14 - 40.74/\text{HR})(\text{SP} - \text{DP})$$

\therefore When **HR** \uparrow then MAP \downarrow



HR Effect of MAP

$$\text{MAP} \simeq \text{DP} + 0.01 \times \exp(4.14 - 40.74/\text{HR})(\text{SP} - \text{DP})$$

∴ When **HR** ↑ then MAP ↓

$$\text{CPP} = \text{MAP} - \text{ICP}$$

∴ When **MAP** ↓ then CPP ↓



HR Effect of MAP

$$\text{MAP} \simeq \text{DP} + 0.01 \times \exp(4.14 - 40.74/\text{HR})(\text{SP} - \text{DP})$$

∴ When **HR** ↑ then **MAP** ↓

$$\text{CPP} = \text{MAP} - \text{ICP}$$

∴ When **MAP** ↓ then **CPP** ↓

∴ When **CPP** ↓ = **G-LOC Risk** ↑



Current Preventive Measures



- Understanding the Push-Pull Risk
 - “Bunt Bradycardia”
- Properly fit Aircrew Flight Equipment (ATAGS)
- Precisely-timed Anti-G Straining Maneuver (AGSM)
 - “Hot Mic”
 - Critical HUD tape review
- Avoid food, drinks, medications, and/or supplement that increase heart rate or lower mean arterial pressure.



Future Preventive Measures



“The effects of physical conditioning on G-tolerance are not well established [and] it may be difficult to suggest to aircrew that convincing data exist to support the notion that any specific exercise program is known to favorably influence any element of their G-tolerance.”



Royal Air Force Push-Pull Training Maneuver



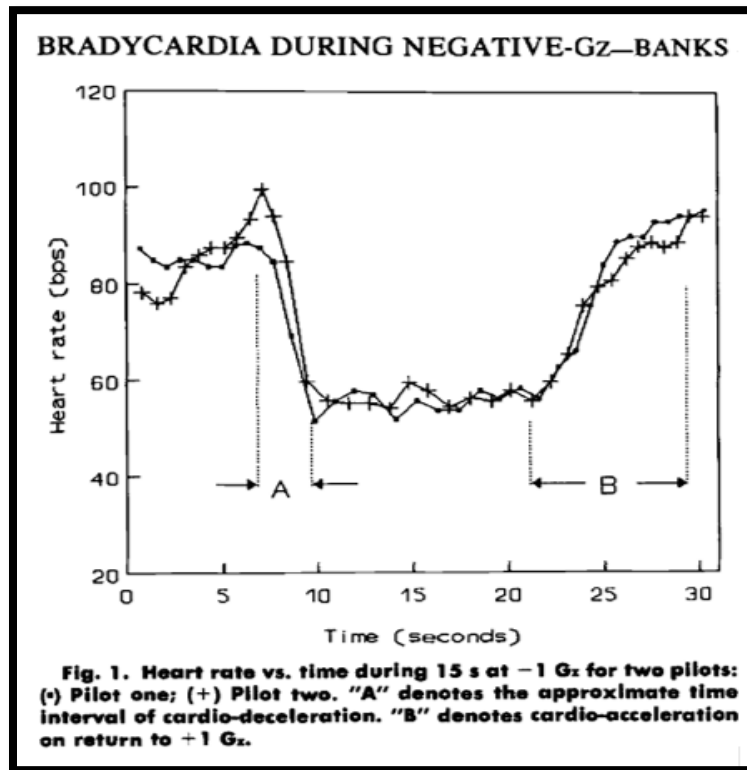
Starting at 400 KIAS at 10K AGL, roll to 100° AOB (left or right) and perform an outside turn holding -1.0G for 5 seconds duration, followed by an immediate transition to +7G sliceback in the same plane at a rate of +10G per second, holding the targeted +7.0G until symptoms become apparent to the student, signs are obvious to the instructor, or 15 seconds elapse, whichever occurs first. Repeat as necessary to achieve parameters routinely experienced during mission.





Future Preventive Measures

- PPM Centrifuge Profiles
- “Predictive” G-suit
- “Integrated” G-Suit





Summary



- Introduction
- Public Release Information
- Anatomy
- Medical Formulas
- Push-Pull Effect Studies
- Current Preventive Measures
- Future Preventive Measures
- Questions?





Questions?

