

Dr. Michael Burnhill, 72; Led in Women's Care

By WOLFGANG SAXON

Published: August 9, 2000

Original article found online at: <http://www.nytimes.com/2000/08/09/nyregion/dr-michael-burnhill-72-led-in-women-s-care.html>

Correction Appended

Dr. Michael Seth Burnhill, a leader in women's health care, family planning and reproductive health, died Friday in New Brunswick, N.J. He was 72 and lived in Belle Mead, N.J.

He was attending to patients in his Belle Mead office earlier that day when he suffered an aortic dissection, or tear, and collapsed, his family said. He died at Robert Wood Johnson Hospital, where he had worked until last year.

Dr. Burnhill had been the vice president for medical affairs of the national Planned Parenthood Federation of America since 1995. He joined the organization in 1972, as medical director of Planned Parenthood of New York City.

Trained as an obstetrician-gynecologist, he became known in the profession in the 1960's when he joined his father, Dr. Charles Birnberg, in developing an early intrauterine device, or IUD. Known as the Birnberg Bow, it was a widely used contraceptive.

Dr. Burnhill, a native of Brooklyn, graduated magna cum laude from Syracuse University in 1949 and received his medical degree at the University of Vermont in 1953. He completed his specialized training at Mount Sinai Hospital in New York in 1960 and received a doctorate of medical science, obstetrics-gynecology, at State University of New York Downstate Medical Center in 1972.

In the 1960's he was affiliated with several hospitals in Brooklyn, as well as with New York Hospital, George Washington University Hospital and Johns Hopkins Hospital and School of Medicine. He joined the staff of Robert Wood Johnson Medical School and University Hospital as a professor of obstetrics and gynecology and senior attending physician in 1979.

Dr. Burnhill, who was divorced, is survived by a daughter, Lauren A. Burnhill of Miami; a son, David A., of Rockville, Md.; and a sister, Marian Mintzer of Fort Lauderdale, Fla.

Correction: August 12, 2000, Saturday A obituary on Wednesday about Dr. Michael Burnhill, a leader in family planning and women's health care, omitted a survivor. She is his mother, Lillian Birnberg of Coconut Creek, Fla.