

Daniel Hale Williams

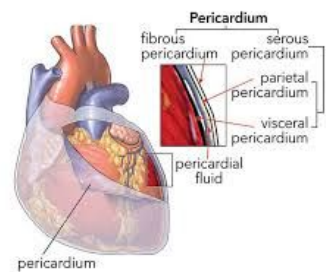
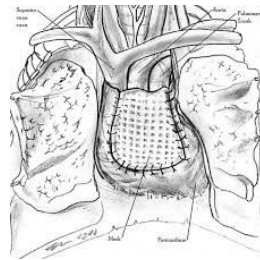


Who was Mr. Williams?

Dr. Daniel Hale Williams was born in Hollidaysburg, Pennsylvania and was the eldest son of 10 children. Williams worked as a barber in his family's business, but his real passion was for education in the medical field. He graduated from Chicago Medical College in 1883, a time where there were less than 5 black doctors in Chicago, and went on to practice his craft on both Black and white patients.

Pericardial Reconstruction

During the summer of 1893, a man named James Cornish was stabbed in the heart and rushed to a Dr. Williams' Provident Hospital. The wound went deeper than expected, and Dr. Williams knew that he had to repair the pericardium (thin sac around the heart) and prevent the gash near Cornish's right artery from further bleeding. At the time, a transfusion was not possible, anesthesia was weak, and resources in general were scarce. Dr. Williams made the best out of what he had, and James Cornish was able to leave the hospital within 51 days. Mr. Cornish lived 20 years after the surgery and Dr. Williams became a pioneer in cardiothoracic surgery.



Leaving a Legacy



In 1891, Dr. Williams opened Provident Hospital and Training School for nurses, which was the first hospital with a racially integrated staff for the nursing and residency programs. He wanted to do this because of the discrimination he saw in the healthcare system. In American hospitals, African American citizens were not being admitted as patients, and African American doctors were not being hired. Several members of the community, including Fredrick Douglass, provided donations and support to the hospital. Dr. Williams' work with the hospital helped to increase healthcare access for Black American patients, and his legacy continues as efforts are made to get rid of the disparities minorities face in medicine.