



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
BUREAU OF MEDICINE AND SURGERY
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IN REPLY REFER TO
BUMEDNOTE 6410
BUMED-M95
10 Feb 2017

BUMED NOTICE 6410

From: Chief, Bureau of Medicine and Surgery

Subj: USE OF NAVY RECOMPRESSION CHAMBERS FOR MEDICAL ASSESSMENT
OF AIRCREW AND AVIATION APPLICANTS

Ref: (a) NAVMED P-117, Manual of the Medical Department
(b) NAVSEA SS521-AG-PRO-010, U.S. Navy Diving Manual (Current Revision)
(c) Aeromedical Waiver and Reference Guide

1. Purpose. The purpose of this notice is to provide guidance for the use of Navy recompression chambers (RCC) for fitness for duty evaluations of aviation duty personnel and applicants due to post-operative changes associated with head and neck surgery and/or otorhinolaryngological concerns. This notice provides a limited exemption from reference (a) and (b) requirements to permit aviation duty personnel and applicants to undergo hyperbaric exposure as part of their medical assessment for suitability for aviation duties.
2. Scope. This notice applies to Navy and Marine Corps facilities operating recompression chambers and all Navy Medicine personnel.
3. Background. The Navy Aerospace Medicine community has historically utilized Navy low pressure chambers (LPC) to assess the ability of aviation duty personnel to equalize pressure within the air-filled spaces of the head after ear, nose, and throat (ENT) surgeries such as functional endoscopic sinus surgery and middle or inner ear procedures. As of 6 April 2016, all Navy LPCs were decommissioned and this option for medical assessment ceased. ENT specialists from the Naval Aerospace Medicine Institute have requested the use of Navy RCCs in lieu of Navy LPCs to assess the ability of at-risk aviators or prospective aviators to equalize pressure within their sinuses and/or middle ear spaces before entering/reentering the hypobaric environment of aviation duty. It has been determined per reference (c), which is located at: <http://www.med.navy.mil/sites/nmotc/nami/arwg/Pages/AeromedicalReferenceandWaiverGuide.aspx>, that the compression/decompression profile within RCCs is a valid surrogate for assessments performed with LPCs.
4. Action. Aviation duty personnel (candidate or designated) who require barometric pressurization testing after otorhinolaryngological procedures, as deemed appropriate and necessary by a qualified Flight Surgeon, may be evaluated in a Navy recompression chamber using a modified diver candidate pressure test, as defined per reference (b). These personnel do

not require a diving duty physical exam, but must have a current aviation duty physical exam and be otherwise cleared for aviation duty by a Flight Surgeon prior to pressure testing. Upon receipt of a written referral or consultation from a designated Flight Surgeon, the cognizant Undersea Medical Officer will coordinate performance of the pressure test with the local Navy RCC. Results of the testing can be reported to the requesting physician using the space provided on the NAVMED 6410/12 Hyperbaric Pressure Testing of Aircrew Consultation Sheet, via the electronic health record, or in person, or telephonically. The NAVMED 6410/12 can be utilized and included in the health record for all RCC testing requests.

5. Records Management. Records created as a result of this notice, regardless of media and format, shall be managed per SECNAV Manual 5210.1 of January 2012.

6. Forms and Reports. NAVMED 6410/12 Hyperbaric Pressure Testing of Aircrew Consultation Sheet is available at: <http://www.med.navy.mil/directives/Pages/NAVMEDForms.aspx>.


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Releasability and distribution:

This instruction is cleared for public release and is available electronically only via the Navy Medicine Web site at: <http://www.med.navy.mil/directives/Pages/BUMEDInstructions.aspx>