

## NAVY MEDICINE FAST FACTS

Special Edition 37



## -- VANGUARD OF MEDICAL INNOVATION -- DIVING MEDICINE BREAKTHROUGHS



In 1932, Navy diving medical officer and researcher Capt. Albert Behnke, Jr. (1903-1992) delineated the symptoms of Arterial Gas Embolism (AGE) from those of Decompression Sickness (DCS), which was critical for advancing the diagnosis and treatment of diving-related injuries.

Behnke and his Navy colleagues demonstrated the effectiveness of using oxygen for recompression therapy in 1935. This innovation became, and remains, the standard of care for treating decompression sickness (AKA, the "bends").

Behnke's efforts in support of the 1939 USS Squalus submarine rescue helped confirm his theory of nitrogen narcosis and demonstrated the efficacy of heliox (helium-oxygen) breathing mixtures for deep dives to prevent the associated cognitive impairment.

