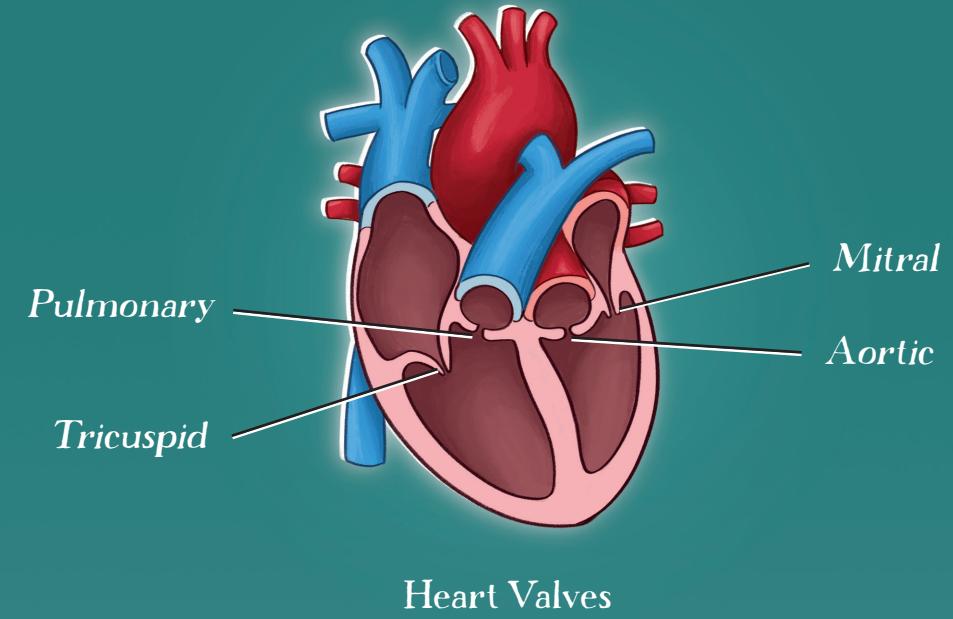




Why does my heart beat?

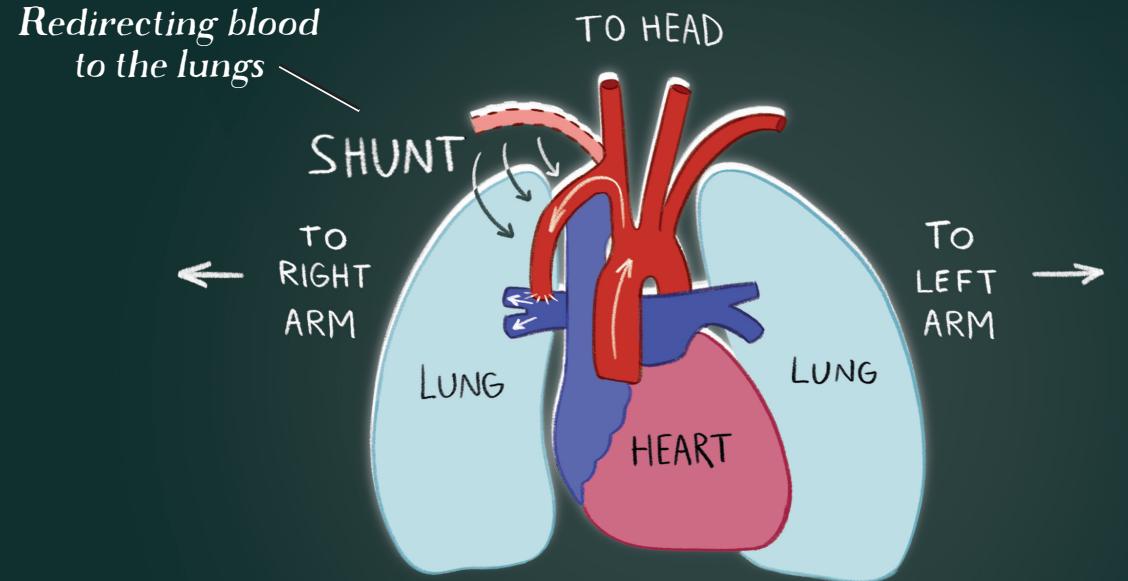


Your heartbeat is the sound of your amazing heart pumping blood through your body. The valves inside your heart go *lub dub* as they open and close to let blood pass through.

Dr. Helen Taussig saw the connection between a healthy heart and a healthy patient. She worked with children whose hearts couldn't pump enough blood to their lungs.



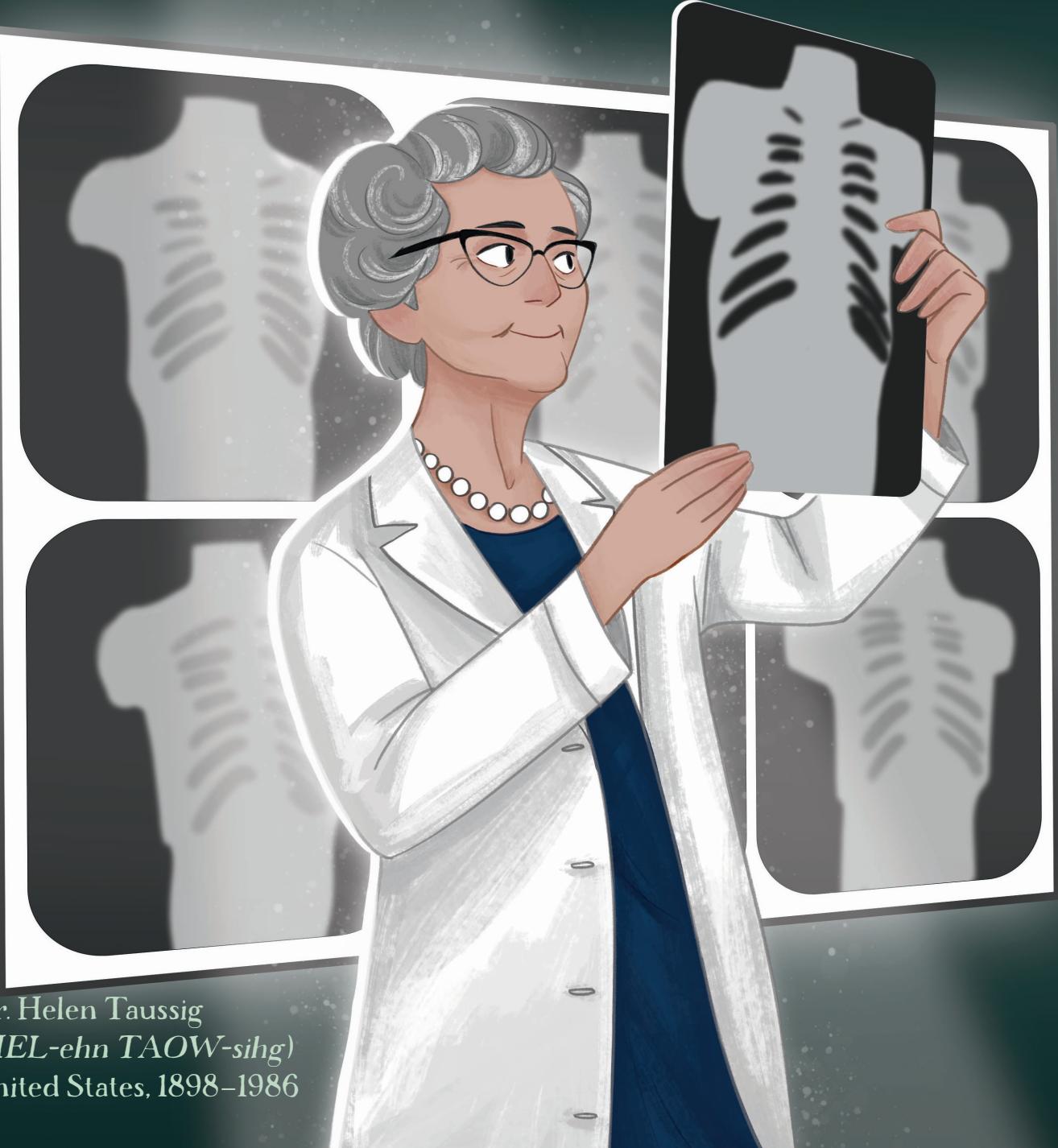
Nobody could figure out how to help, but Dr. Helen didn't give up. Even after she lost her hearing, she listened for that *lub dub* sound with her hands. Eventually, she found a way to solve the problem: a surgery that could create a new path, called a shunt, for blood to flow to the lungs.



Blalock-Thomas-Taussig Shunt

When a surgeon finally agreed to try Dr. Helen's daring operation, it worked!

The Blalock-Thomas-Taussig shunt operation is still performed today, usually on babies who get to grow up thanks to Dr. Helen's efforts. Her revolutionary work made her the first doctor in the brand new healthcare specialty that she created: pediatric cardiology.

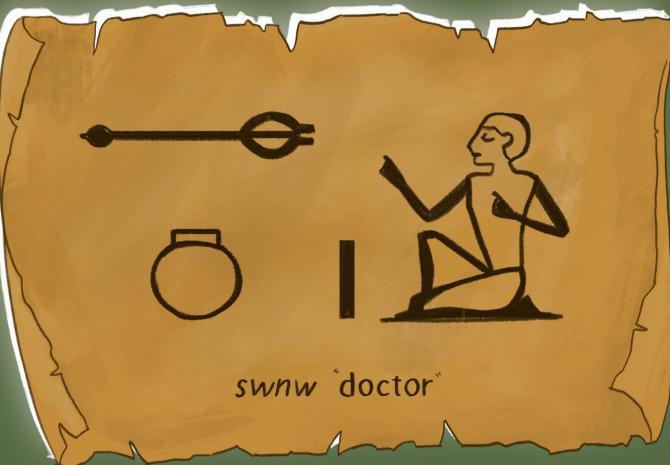


Dr. Helen Taussig
(HEL-ehn TAOW-sihg)
United States, 1898–1986



Who invented healthcare?

It's hard to say, because healthcare workers have been caring for people for as long as there have been people. Peseshet was in charge of women doctors in Egypt over 4,000 years ago. It was an important job, because just like today, people counted on doctors for their wisdom and healing expertise.



Peseshet
(PEH-seh-shet)
Egypt, around 2500 BCE



Peseshet and her doctors didn't have modern medicines or technology like ours, so they had to be very creative. Doctors of the time used fabric for bandages and made medicines with materials such as honey, coal, and plants. They set broken bones, healed wounds, and helped people with all kinds of health issues.

