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Title: Maine's urchin diver: a survey of diving experience, medical problems, and diving-related symptoms

Authors: Butler, WP

Keywords: cold
decompression
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Issue Date: 1995

Abstract: A questionnaire was sent to 1,545 licensed, hand-harvesting Maine urchin divers to survey diving experience, habits, environment, medical problems, and symptoms; 323 surveys were returned. Most of the respondents were young males who considered themselves physically fit; however, 17% were over 41 and 4% considered themselves "out of shape." Most had more than one occupation. Only 2% admitted no formal training, and breadth of experience fell into a trimodal distribution. Over half dove 2-5 times daily, most often under 60 ft. "Bounce" diving without decompression stops was usual, and solo diving was frequent. Eighteen percent had chronic medical problems, and 11% chronically used medications. The majority of diving was vigorous work from boats in the cold Maine ocean, not infrequently during poor weather. Seventy-eight percent described diving-related symptoms, and 2% admitted to recompression therapy. Thus, these respondents depict themselves diving within marginal safety boundaries.

Description: Undersea and Hyperbaric Medical Society, Inc. (<http://www.uhms.org>)

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