



POTPOURRI

Have you heard about the new sushi bar down town that caters exclusively to lawyers? It's called SOSUMI! Legal Facts...

"You've got to help me Doc, the Irishman said. "It's me ear. There's something in there."

"Let's have a look. Why, my goodness, it's true...You've got money lodged up in there".

The doctor proceeded to pull out a \$100 bill. "Wow," he said "And there is still more. Out came a few more hundreds, then some fifties and some tens. Finally the doctor said, "Well, that seems to be it."

"How much was there all told?"

"One thousand, nine hundred and ninety dollars."

"A, yes, that'd be right," said the Irishman. "I knew I wasn't feeling two grand."

A man comes into the ER and yells, "My wife's going to have her baby in the cab!!" I grabbed my stuff, rushed out to the cab, lifted the lady's dress and began to take off her underwear. Suddenly I noticed that there were several cabs and I was in the wrong one.

Dr. Mark MacDonald, San Antonio, TX

At the beginning of my shift, I placed a stethoscope on an elderly and slightly deaf female patient's anterior chest wall. "Big breaths," I instructed. "Yes, they used to be," sighed the patient.

Dr. Richard Byrnes, Seattle, WA

I was performing a complete physical, including the visual acuity test. I placed the patient twenty feet from the chart and began with, "Cover your right eye with your hand." He read the 20/20 line perfectly. "Now your left." Again a flawless read. "Now both," I requested. There was silence...He couldn't even read the large E on the top line. I turned and discovered he had done exactly what I had asked; he was standing there with both eyes covered. I was laughing too hard to finish the exam.

Dr. Matthew Theodopolous, Worcester, MA

A Family Affair

The well dressed business man in the consultation room had abnormal liver function tests. As I progressed through the history, I was getting no clues to the cause.

He denied excessive alcohol intake; had no risk factors for viral hepatitis; was on no medications and had no symptoms. Thinking he may have some genetic disease such as hemochromatosis, I launched into his family history.

Q. Are your father and mother alive?

A. Mother is. Dad is dead...

Q. What did your father die of?

A. Oh, of natural causes...

Q. That doesn't help me much. What disease did he die of?

A. Well, actually my mother shot him.

Q. And you consider that a natural cause?

A. (With a slight wry grin) Everyone who knew them considered it natural... I can't remember if I ever found a cause for his abnormal tests...

(Sent in by retired Hilo RN Patsy Matsuura)

During a patient's two week follow-up appointment with his cardiologist, he informed me, his doctor, that he was having trouble with one of his medications. "Which one?" I asked. "The patch. The nurse told me to put on a new one every six hours and I'm running out of places to put it". I had him quickly undress and discovered what I hoped I wouldn't see... Yes, the

man had over fifty patches on his body! Now the instructions include: "remove the old patch before applying a new one."

Dr. Rebecca St. Clair, Norfolk, VA

While acquainting myself with a new elderly patient, I asked, "How long have you been bedridden?" After a look of complete confusion she answered. "Why, not for about twenty years, when my husband was alive."

Dr. Steven Swanson, Corvallis, OR

I was caring for a woman from Kentucky and asked, "So how's your breakfast this morning?" "It's very good, except for the Kentucky Jelly. I can't seem to get used to the taste," the patient replied. I then asked to see the jelly and the woman produced a foil packet labeled "KY Jelly."

Dr. Leonard Krandorf, Detroit, MI

A nurse was on duty in the Emergency Room, when a young woman with purple hair styled into a punk rocker Mohawk, sporting a variety of tattoos, and wearing strange clothing entered. It was quickly determined that the patient had acute appendicitis and was scheduled for immediate surgery. When she was completely disrobed on the operating table, the staff noticed that her pubic hair had been dyed green and above it there was a tattoo that read, "Keep off the grass." Once the surgery was completed, the surgeon wrote a short note on the patient's dressing which said, "Sorry, had to mow the lawn."

Medical Tid Bits

Kidney stones: About 10% of Americans have had kidney stones and told to cut down on calcium. Italian researchers report that a diet low in salt and very low in protein (approximately four oz./day) with normal intake of calcium is better for preventing the problem. Researchers found that low calcium diets may actually promote kidney stones.

SSRI's and Therapy: JAMA reports that between 1987 and 1997, the number of Americans being treated for depression tripled from 1.8 million to 6.3 million while those taking antidepressants has doubled (the vast majority on SSRI's. Lifting depression with fewer side effects and less risk of overdose). The downside is that a lot of people aren't getting face-to-face therapy...Over the same period, JAMA reports that patients in therapy dropped from 71% to 60.2%.

OD on Vitamin B: Labels on most Vitamin B bottles reflect how much Vitamin B are in the pills, but in more than 1/2 of the brands tested, the amount of Vitamin B exceeded the stated amount. The worse offender is NIACIN (more than 35mg/day causes skin flushing and liver damage).

Cold War: A drug called PLECONARIL may be approved by FDA after this year's cold and flu season. the drug cuts the duration of symptoms by one day by attacking the cold virus and destroying its ability to reproduce.

Aspirin Alert: Folks on low dose aspirin to prevent a second heart attack think nothing about taking additional anti-inflammatories, e.g., ibuprofen which interferes with aspirin's ability to protect the heart. (Tylenol, Voltarin, and Vioxx do not mess with aspirin.)

The Great Multivitamin Debate: The New England Journal of Medicine reports that the benefits of multivitamins is still far from certain, but the dollars spent on them may be a good investment.

Folate: (One of the B vitamins) prevents neural tube defects in embryos and with B12 and B6 decreases the reblockage of coronary stenosis after angioplasty.

Healthy folks who take 400 I.U. of Vitamin E daily for at least two years are less likely to develop heart disease.

Important caveat: It's easy to take too much RETINOL (preformed Vitamin A) from supplements which increases the risk of hip fractures and birth defects. (Multivitamins are no substitute for exercise and a balanced diet per Christine Gorman).

BEST PATIENTS

Five surgeons are discussing who makes the best patients on the operating table.

The first surgeon says, "I like to see accountants on my operating table, because when you open them up, everything inside is numbered."

The second responds, "Yeah, but you should try electricians! Everything inside them is color coded."

The third surgeon says, "No, I really think librarians are the best, everything inside them is in alphabetical order."

The fourth surgeon chimes in, "You know, I like construction workers, those guys always understand when you have a few parts left over at the end and when the job takes longer than you said it would."

But the fifth surgeon shut them all up when he observed, "You're all wrong."

Politicians are the easiest to operate on. There's no guts, no heart, and no spine, and the head and their behind are interchangeable."

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Two atoms were walking down the sidewalk when they accidentally bumped in each other.

"I'm really sorry!" the first atom exclaimed, "Are you all right?"

"Actually, no," the second atom replies, "I lost an electron."

"Oh, no!" "Are you sure?"

"I'm positive!"

A study in the Washington Post says women have better verbal skills than men...

"I just want to say to the authors of that study...Duh!"

Conan O'Brian, "Last Night" NPR

All in the Family

Several years ago, I was taking the initial history from a rural farmer... This middle aged man had a longstanding history of asthma and rhinitis...

The patient offered his opinion: "You know Doc," he said, "They say that this here allergies are inherited, but heck, I know a lot of people who got them that ain't related to me!"

Spotty Knowledge

With our universities adopting the new curriculum of getting medical students involved with patients at an earlier stage in their education, teaching first year students can be quite a humerous experience.

One such student, Alan, was recently interviewing a young woman while I observed nearby.

"What seems to be the problem today?" Alan asked...

"Well, I've been having a lot of spotting over the past week," said the patient.

"I see," Alan replied, "And where are the spots?"

*Dr. Daniel Ezekiel, Vancouver
"Stitches", January 2002*

In matters arithmetical, down under it's "maths," but in Canada it's "math." This gave rise to an interesting situation in Emergency when an elderly couple presented with the complaint that the wife had lost her memory the preceding week.

After some inquiry I embarked upon a mini mental assessment. The poor

lady was, however, all at sea when it came to serial sevens.

Feeling sorry for her embarrassment, I commented, "I guess you weren't very good at "maths" when you were young?"

There was a pause, then both partners chimed in together, "Oh, no, we're not Catholics, we're Protestants."

*Dr. T.R. Aitken, Ontario
"Stitches", January, 2002*

Baby Soy: Infants on soy bean formula grow up as healthy as those on standard cow derived formula...Soy's high level of photoestrogen (which act like female sex hormones could affect development, but experts say breast milk is still the best."

Oral Adviser: A study investigating HIV transmission from oral sex showed zero cases...Unprotected oral sex with infected partners is safer than anal or vaginal sex with condom; (protected oral sex is certainly the safest).

Undiagnosed Hypertension: About one-half of the estimated 42 million Americans with hypertension are unaware they have a condition. (70% had seen a doctor three times the past year and 90% have insurance).

Lung Cancer: A study of half a million people in 116 cities shows that long term exposure to soot particles from coal burning plants and diesel engines raises the risk of lung cancer 20% (comparable to living with a smoker).

Solution: Get out of town and try air filters

The PSA Controversy

Possible causes of elevated PSA's: Infection; inflammation; long bike rides; enlarged prostate; PROSTATE CANCER.

Routine PSA studies: Two trials are underway to determine whether routine PSA tests save lives. But the results will not be in for another five or ten years.

Controversial Issues Regarding Prostate Cancer:

- Not all prostate cancers are equally deadly;
- Most men if they live long enough, develop prostate cancer.
- And most men do not die from their prostate cancer.
- 10% to 15% of prostate cancers are very benign and 10% to 15% are very aggressive. It is hard to predict what will happen to the middle 70%.
- Most men who get prostate cancer don't die from it. So why get tested? Good question. (Per TIME medical reporter: Christine Gorman)

Repair Kit: Researchers report that adult stem cells don't just generate blood cells; they also develop into skin, liver, and intestinal tissues—which suggests that the body has a stash of universal repair cells capable of being dispatched to wherever they are needed.

Diphenhydramine: (An ingredient in many over the counter drugs) in the elderly. Dr. Joseph Agostini and colleagues at Yale School of Medicine investigated 426 hospital patients, ages 70 or older and discovered DIPHENHYDRAMINE increased the likelihood of delirium by 70% causing symptoms like garbled speech and confusion.

The AM Advantage

Certain cancer drugs seem to work better and have fewer side effects when taken in the morning. Now a study suggests that dialysis patients treated in the morning live longer.

Researchers at Emory University in Atlanta tracked the welfare of 242 patients aged 60 and older who were on dialysis in 1988.

Patients who were treated before 11 AM survived longer (by more than a year) than those on an afternoon schedule).

Mending Hearts...

Scientists from New York Medical College examined hearts from eight men who had been transplanted hearts from women donors and found that the female hearts contained male cells.

Piero Anversa, heart researcher and coauthor of the study called them "primitive stem cells," hopes the primitive cells can be mobilized to fix heart problems. "The fantasy is that they'll generate all the cell lineages that you have in the heart. The ultimate goal is to get the heart to heal itself."

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It was a stifling hot day and a man fainted in the middle of a busy intersection... Traffic quickly piled up in all directions and a woman rushed over to help him. As she knelt down to loosen his collar, a man emerged from the crowd, pushed her aside and said, "It's all right honey. I've had a course in first aid."

The woman stood up and watched as he took the ill man's pulse and prepared to administer artificial respiration.

At this point, she tapped him on the shoulder and said, "When you get to the point about calling the doctor, I'm already here."

Kerri, a vet, was feeling ill and went to see Dr. West. He began to ask all the usual questions, symptoms, duration, and the like—when Kerri suddenly cut him off. "Hey, look, I'm a vet," she declared. "I don't need to ask my patients these kinds of questions. I can tell what's wrong just by looking at them—why can't you?"

The doctor just nodded in response, looked Kerri up and down, and wrote out a prescription. He handed it to her and said, "There you are. Now, of course, if that doesn't work, we'll have to put you down."

The doctor took Dan into the room and said, "Dan, I have some good news and some bad news." "Oh, no... Give me the good news, I guess," Dan replied. "They're going to name a disease after you."

A college physics professor was explaining a particularly complicated concept to his class when a pre-med student interrupted him...

"Laparoscopic Donor...", Continued from p. 100

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-Officer Recruiter: LT Jeffrey P. Borja
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Physician Wanted

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