

This Column Is Not For The Feint Of Heart **By Lou Lombardo, LMT, NCTMB**

A couple of weeks back, I wrote about my long overdue annual physical.

Several people (actual number-5) were kind enough to respond to that report. One friend, who shall remain anonymous, (her name rhymes with Wanita May) said it was a little more information that she needed to know about me.

If you remember, that article focused on a procedure many of us “Baby Boomers” are facing in our chronologically gifted years- the big “C” as in colonoscopy. I was (not) looking forward to this event which was scheduled to occur by the end of the summer.

Low and behold, my doctor, Dean Romanick, was able to expedite the process by putting me in touch with a physician who could perform the procedure almost immediately. THANKS A LOT, DOC!

So, as a follow up to that column, I am happy to report that I have successfully undergone this probe of sorts and am more than willing to put the experience behind me (where it originated in the first place).

And, because this is an informational column (or so I’d like to think) what I am about to describe is the actual process I undertook to prepare for the procedure.

I consulted with Dr. Foresman, physician of choice, two days before the procedure. He was very pleasant, taking care not to mention the “C” word for the first fifteen minutes. He asked me several questions, some medical and some just casual to make me feel at ease. He did, I was. The fact that he recognized me from reading my columns was an ego boost and certainly established himself in my mind as a well-read intellectual.

He then explained to me how the procedure was to take place.

At this time a brief review of anatomy seems appropriate. For those of you who are squeamish in nature, turn your head for the next paragraph or two.

The subject in question- the colon- is the longest portion of the large intestine. It is divided into the ascending, transverse, descending and sigmoid portions.

The primary function of the large intestine is to absorb fluids and electrolytes and eliminate wastes. Substances known as polyps have a tendency to form on the walls of the large intestine. If allowed to grow, these may become cancerous, causing life-threatening results.

This procedure provides an up close look at the colon from within and, if necessary, includes the extraction of any existing polyps.

Okay, you faint of hearts can look back now.

Dr. Foresman gave me a set on instructions to follow for the next two days. It began with a list of what I would need: a 10 oz. bottle of Magnesium Citrate, a 3 oz. bottle of Phospho-Soda Prep and, I'm not making this up, a GOOD ATTITUDE. (Who says there's no humor in medicine?)

So armed with this brief list I went to the local large chain story pharmacy to procure the items. I sought the aid of a clerk who, when she saw my list, had kind of a smirk on her face so as to say' "Ha, I know what you are going to go through!"

Anyway, she led me to the items, but she couldn't decide whether the product on the shelf- Citrate of Magnesium, was that same as Magnesium Citrate.

She told me to wait while she sought the advice of the pharmacist. Knowing what I know about chemistry, I took the bottle and left before she returned.

Since I had to begin a clear liquid diet for the next 2 days, I also picked up some grapefruit juice, ginger ale, clear broth and Jello. I never knew how many flavors of Jello there are. I'm sure its inventor of many years ago up the road in LeRoy, had no clue about the future popularity of his product.

So I went home, had my last supper of solid food, a piece of pizza (as opposed to spaghetti which was served at the original Last Supper) and began my 2-day prep by downing the Citrate of Magnesium. Do the words "fast acting" mean anything to you? They do to me! I won't get into details. I'll just give you the watered down version.

The stuff did what it was intended to do- so did the Phospho-Soda the next day. In between time one positive side effect with all this action was that I increased my reading by volumes.

And I never missed solid food until I was not allowed to eat it. But I did lose five pounds during the process. That'll certainly be short-lived.

So now I was ready to report to the hospital for the actual "look-see".

The next column will describe the big 'C' procedure and hopefully bring this adventure to an end, so to speak- at least for the next five years or so.

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