

Appendix 1: Questionnaire used to interview physicians who nodded off*Did you feel encouraged to know that you were not alone? (circle one)*

1	2	3	4	5
Very encouraged, able to live a normal life again without shame		Neither here nor there		More despondent than ever to be part of such rabble

Would you be likely to attend such a lecture again? (circle one)

1	2	3	4	5
Can't wait — always need a nap		Will go along if paid		Would rather have teeth drilled

Whose fault do you think it was that you nodded off? (circle one)

1	2	3	4	5
The speaker's fault entirely				Mea maxima culpa

The long and the short of it

Michelle Greiver

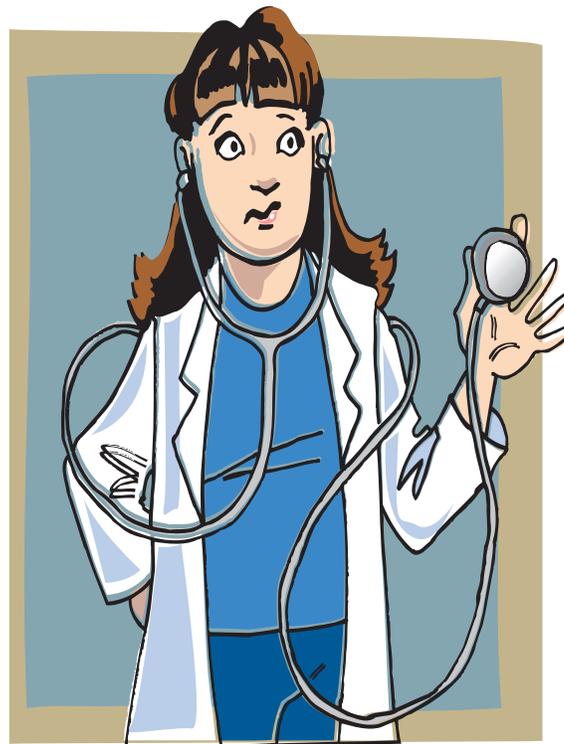


he day after I returned from summer vacation this year, I felt as if I needed some medication to help me cope with the accumulated pile of correspondence, lab reports and phone calls to return. Perhaps someone should devise a “morning-after-vacation” pill. My office administrator says that going through all this material is like conducting an archaeological dig, in which I remove progressive strata of charts to get to the bottom of things. And of course there was the usual volume of patients with urgent problems that could be handled only by me (it’s nice to be thought indispensable) and that had to wait (the urgency notwithstanding) for my return.

To boot, the little steel bar that provides tension to hold the earpieces of my stethoscope in place broke that day, so that the instrument kept falling off my ears. I ordered a new one, and the manufacturer has sent me one that is 27 inches long, a stethoscope on Viagra. I can hold the bell at arm’s length, perhaps for patients I don’t really care about. The company says that’s the only length they have: they’re supersizing everything these days. The long and the short of it is, I feel like I’ve got an elephant’s trunk swinging around my neck. My old forme fruste was never as frustrating as this.

Dear Santa, I really have tried to be good. Next year could I please have a long vacation and a short stethoscope?

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