

FICTION | SPRING 2016

ASK YOUR DOCTOR

By Daniel Waters

Here at PharmasMarketTM we know that there is a bewildering array of medical problems that you may or may not have but almost certainly need to treat. As part of our ongoing mission to reeducate the health-savvy consumer we present an annotated list of some of the newest syndromes that are most likely to be *afflicting you right now*.

Opiate Induced Consternation (OIC)

Not to be confused with its near-identical moniker, this condition arises when your legally prescribed oxycodone tablets no longer obscure the bottom of the pharmacy bottle and refills are listed as zero. Feelings of anxiousness, outright fear, paranoia and improvement in constipation symptoms are common. Don't suffer in silence. Ask your doctor or, better yet, ask a different doctor if more narcotics are right for you.

Achy Traveling Pain (ATP)

This malady primarily targets men and women between the ages of twenty and ninety; its cause is unknown. Symptoms include an ill-defined and nebulously localized ache which travels in a meandering line from one anatomic location to another, like Billy in *The Family Circus*. Pain is often worse but not limited to hours with one digit and months that contain an "R". Several difficult to pronounce medications have shown promise in scientific studies not reviewed by the FDA. Ask your doctor which one is right for you.

Everyone Else is Happier (EEH)

Look to your right and then to your left. Everyone else *is* happier. Maybe they know something you don't. Maybe that something is a prescription medicine 9 out of 10 providers would use themselves if they could legally obtain it. Ask your doctor or pharmacist. Or that Goth kid your niece is dating. Relief comes in many forms. Angels unaware, if you catch our drift.

Relaxed Leg Syndrome (RLS)

One of the most common of the Leg Spectrum Disorders (LSD), this may be the reason you're not more productive; not living life to its fullest; not climbing Kilimanjaro or skiing the American Birkebeiner. Feel like much of the time you want to do something that resembles activity but can't? Who can blame you, what with a leg that, according to no less an authority than Sir Isaac Newton, once at rest tends to remain at rest? Talk with your doctor. Probably on the phone at first. Most pharmacies deliver now.

P.0. Neurodynia (PON)

Forget aggravated; way past irritated; your nerves are just plain pissed off. All the damn time. No wonder you got unjustly tagged with that "disruptive employee" label. It's just the illness talking; you're not normally a violent person. Not in the cafeteria line, anyway. Take back your life. Ask your doctor if an expensive medication whose name sounds like a *Star Trek* planet could be the answer.

Celebrity Transference Dysphoria (CTD)

Why should stars have all the fun? You may not be beautiful, talented, or athletically gifted but there's no reason you can't have something in common with the rich and famous that are. Imagine taking the same daily medication as your childhood idol. It doesn't get more intimate than that. Like a personalized autograph in your bloodstream. Ask your health care provider. But first, look up some symptoms on the internet. Just to be on the safe side.

Big Pharma Delusional Disorder (BPDD)

Feeling as though you're being sold diseases instead of medications? Poppycock and nonsense! BPDD affects 99% of the consuming public. Why should you be spared? Want to feel better about the non-generics that are killing your HSA? Of course you do – that's why God created the deductible. Contact your physician today. On second thought, wait until he or she returns from their expenses-paid educational junket in Bali. Then ask them to help you choose the illness that's right for you.

Pharmas MarketTM

Because the unmedicated life is not worth living.

Daniel Waters Actively practices cardiothoracic surgery in Iowa. He was awarded Graduate Certificate in Narrative Medicine from Lenoir-Rhyne University (Spring 2016), and is currently a candidate for M.A. in Writing, The Thomas Wolfe Center for Narrative at Lenoir-Rhyne. He first published as a medical student in 1980; numerous stories and essays and two small books of surgical advice since.

© 2016 Intima: A Journal of Narrative Medicine