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What Isn't Wrong with Me?

It wasn't deflating that my left knee began throbbing shortly after what otherwise would have been a rather pleasant outdoor run worked into the hellish conditions of the godforsaken winter of 2013-14. When you don't keep up your exercise regimen, you expect your body to get revenge.

The galling part was not being able to remember which "itis" was bothering me: Was it the arthritis knee or the tendonitis knee? I couldn't remember which was which. Which "itis" is it?

You know you're getting old when you can't keep track of how many afflictions you've suffered that end in "itis."

Age often is a factor in prostatitis and I had a really bad go-round with it several years ago. If I'd kept track, my number of nightly trips to the bathroom would have looked like a New York taxi dispatcher's log.

At the other end of the spectrum, like many young teens, I developed tonsillitis, which manifests itself as a sore throat that requires a tonsillectomy, which typically is treated with Popsicles and ice cream. They didn't offer those after my prostate surgery, and I probably would have needed "use as directed" instructions if they had.

I've had sinusitis, which inflames the sinus passages and makes a person feel like roadkill. I have some form of dermatitis as I write this and my underarms burn and my chest has a bright red, bib-shaped band below my neck, similar to a rose-breasted grosbeak.

I contracted bronchitis my freshman year of high school, was dressed down by my coach in front of my teammates for having a coughing fit during baseball spring training and thrown out of practice for "being out of shape."

Baseball had always been my best sport, but I never went back.

There was the severe case of plantar fasciitis I developed several years ago, the feeling that I'd mistakenly walked over burning coals with the heels of my feet, the extraordinarily painful cortisone shots in my right heel, and the eventual cure: six months sleeping with a "night splint" on my foot.

And then there was the time I had epicondylitis, or tennis elbow, so bad that I couldn't lift a coffee cup without an accompanying jolt of electrifying nerve pain.

There are other forms of "itis" that aren't really medical conditions but are commonly used. Senioritis? Had a lot of that in high school and a little in college.

Wikipedia has an entry for boomeritis that defines it as "a narcissistic liberal worldview associated with baby boomers." Well, I am a boomer, I do have a liberal worldview, and I have used "I" four times now in one sentence.

Mondayitis? Yeah, that's a weekly occurrence.

There are plenty of other "itises" out there, and, if I live long enough, I'll probably develop a few of them. Appendicitis. Gingivitis. Bursitis. Colitis. Gastritis. Conjunctivitis. Hopefully not hepatitis, meningitis, or aortitis.

The suffix, "-itis" simply means inflammation. Life is swell.

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