

Outlook on Lifestyle

DR. GOTT



Peter Gott, M.D.

Physical condition can trigger temper of mood disorder

By Peter H. Gott, M.D.

DEAR DR. GOTT: My son, 20, cannot control his temper. He can't take

any pressure without hitting someone. When he was 7 he took medicine for hyperactivity and was better for a while. It's bad now. The doctor says it sounds like a chemical imbalance. What do you suggest?

DEAR READER: An uncontrollable temper can be the result of a chemical imbalance in the brain — so-called bipolar mood disorder — that has a physical basis and is often successfully treated with medicine. Temper outbursts are also a sign of emotional disorders that seem not to have a physical basis.

Psychiatrists, M.D.s with specialty training in diseases of the brain and emotional states, can be helpful in delineating the causes of inappropriate behavior. I recommend that you encourage your son's doctor to refer him to a psychiatrist. If your son does not

get help with his problem, I'm afraid that he may eventually end up getting hurt — or hurting someone else.

To give you more information, I'm sending you a free copy of my Health Report, MENTAL AND EMOTIONAL ILLNESS. Other readers who would like a copy should send \$1 and their name and address to P.O. Box 91369, Cleveland, OH 44101-3369. Be sure to mention the title.

DEAR DR. GOTT: I had rheumatic fever as a child. About three months ago, I had a sore throat, pain and redness in my foot and other joints, weakness and a thumping heart. A doctor told me I had arthritis (I'm 37) and prescribed Naprosyn. Then I noticed what looked like black splinters in my nails. On a whim, I looked up the symptoms in a medical dictionary. They all indicate rheumatic heart dis-

ease, but the doctor says that's impossible. Is it?

DEAR READER: After practically disappearing for many years, rheumatic fever is beginning to reappear. Several recent medical reports have documented outbreaks of rheumatic fever in various parts of the country. Experts are stumped about why this is happening.

Rheumatic fever follows a streptococcal infection, usually of the throat, and is characterized by arthritis, heart inflammation, fever, rash and tremors. Antibiotics and aspirin are useful in treatment. Rheumatic heart disease, consisting primarily of valve damage, can follow an attack of rheumatic fever. Occasionally, bacterial infection of heart valves occurs; this is a serious complication of rheumatic heart disease. When this happens, small hemorrhages, which look like

splinters, can appear under the fingernails.

I disagree with your doctor. You could have rheumatic fever and/or rheumatic heart disease. You should be examined (and be tested) by an internist, a doctor trained in diagnosis. Here is one situation in which a second opinion is mandatory.

DEAR DR. GOTT: What is a trick knee? Since I slipped and fell a year ago, my leg gives out during exercise, my knee swells up and I can't walk. My family thinks I'm overreacting.

DEAR READER: "Trick knee" is a phrase used to connote a variety of joint disorders, all of which have a common characteristic: instability of the knee. Ligament damage and cartilage problems can cause pain, swelling and a "giving way" feeling.

You need to be examined by an orthopedic surgeon who will diagnose the reason for your knee problem and suggest treatment. Therapy runs the gamut from strengthening exercises to surgery designed to restabilize the knee.

I do not believe that you are overreacting to your symptoms. A specialist should be able to help you overcome this troublesome handicap.

DEAR MEG



Meg Whitcomb

Irate ex-girlfriend dogs his fiancee

By Meg Whitcomb

DEAR MEG — Barry and I are engaged. Before we met, he dated a girl named Beverly. She's trying her hardest to get him back.

For the past month, Beverly has been making crank calls. She phones here, hangs up when I answer, waits a while, then does it again. Sometimes she'll talk to me. She tells me lies about Barry.

Her other trick is to call Barry's house and speak to his parents. She tells them she's me and says things to turn them against me.

Barry has tried to get her to leave us alone, but it hasn't worked. — VICTIMS, ANN ARBOR, MICH.

DEAR VICTIMS — Barry hasn't tried very hard. If Beverly's aim is to get him back, he should call her and make it clear that there's no hope whatever. Further, he should tell his parents not to listen to her.

If she still won't quit, you're talking major cuckoo. Your last resort is to tell her you're going to report her to

the telephone company. But I suspect her line will have gone dead before that!

DEAR MEG — I'm a senior citizen, and my golden years are tarnished by loneliness. I'm looking for companionship, but when I tried the singles' scene, I left disgusted. All I found were young men looking for older women to pay their bills or take care of them.

I want someone to lean on, not lean on me. I want someone to walk with, talk with and share the beauty of nature with me. As I sit here alone, I look at a bottle of pills and wonder, why I don't take them and forget there is no one out there who really cares?

Do you know how I could find someone who feels the same way I do? Maybe the two of us could get togeth-

er. — ALONE, AUSTIN, TEXAS

DEAR ALONE — Your Noah's-ark view of companionship is part of the problem. So is your lamppost attitude.

Why restrict yourself to the male of the species to alleviate loneliness? And looking for a male to lean on will land you flat on your face when the support gives way. The actuarial tables are against you, with senior men's death rates outpacing women's by a greater margin the older you get.

Women make wonderful friends. Enjoying walks, talks and nature has nothing to do with gender. So get involved with people of either sex who like to do the things you do. You'll find life can be beautiful. People power beats pill power any day.

DEAR POLLY — It's almost time to start planting seeds indoors for next summer's garden. Here's my method. I put the potting soil in my starting pots, then I use the eraser on a pencil to pick up four or five tomato seeds. With these stuck on the end of the eraser, I simply punch the pencil down into the soil mixture, give it a twist, and withdraw it. The seeds are left behind, perfectly planted with no mess, no fuss and no bother. — H.L.D.



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POLLY'S POINTERS



Polly Fisher

This clever gift is full of beans

By Polly Fisher

DEAR POLLY — For a hostess gift, I hit on this idea: I make up a plastic bag filled with a wide variety of dried beans, peas and grains — kidney beans, pinto beans, adzuki beans, black turtle beans, black-eyed peas, split green and yellow peas, lentils, barley, rice, etc. Then I type a recipe

for making my favorite bean soup. I make up a second bag containing all the spices and seasonings for the soup. Packaged together, this makes a clever gift and an easy-to-prepare meal. — VERONICA

DEAR VERONICA — This idea could be adapted to a variety of dried legume soups and casseroles. The variety of beans makes a very colorful and attractive mixture, too. Your helpful Pointer earns you the Pointer of the Week award, a copy of my book, "Polly's Pointers: 1,081 Helpful Hints for Making Everything Last Longer." Others who would like this

book may order it for \$6.50. Make your check payable to POLLY'S POINTERS and send to POLLY'S POINTERS, P.O. Box 93863, Cleveland, OH 44101-5863. — POLLY

DEAR POLLY — Want to save money on fresh air when bathroom odors need removing? There's no need for expensive air fresheners. Light a candle in the bathroom for just a minute. (Adults only, please!) It clears the air of odors really fast!

When spreading mayonnaise, don't

bother with a butter-knife. Get a rubber spatula. It holds more than a knife and you can get the last smidgen of mayo out of the curves of the bottle. Especially good if you have many sandwiches to make! — MARY

DEAR POLLY — Plastic jugs from milk or vinegar take up so much space in garbage bags! I use a sharp paring knife to cut off the bottom, then slice down the sides to the neck, cutting across to make a flat pile of plastic pieces. This only takes a minute and it's a real space saver. — R.G.

DEAR POLLY — Obtain a nice golden brown finish on your unpainted furniture the inexpensive way. Just apply liquid shoe polish. Let it dry, then buff it. Additional coats result in deeper, richer finishes and the wood grain always shows through. — D.G.

DEAR POLLY — What can be done to prevent orange juice from separating, especially when it has been reconstituted from frozen juice? — V.W.R.

DEAR V.W.R. — Sorry, but I know of no way to prevent frozen, reconstituted orange juice from separating after it stands for a while. I mix mine in a covered container and simply give it a few shakes before pouring it. If you keep yours in a pitcher, just give it a stir before pouring.

If you like frothy orange juice, you might try mixing it in a blender, which gives a nice foamy head to the juice. But when left to stand in the refrigerator for a day, it can still separate. — POLLY

DEAR POLLY — I eat soft-boiled eggs from my favorite old egg cup. I noticed I always left some white in the shell until one day I picked up my grapefruit spoon by mistake. With the serrated edges, it was very easy to completely get the shell empty of all the egg. — MARGARET

DEAR POLLY — We're having a wedding in our family soon, and we plan to throw bird seed instead of rice at the newlyweds. This will feed our Indiana songbirds and will save the work of trying to get the rice out of the glass. — MARION

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