

Outlook on Lifestyle

DR. GOTT



Peter Gott, M.D.

Scaly spots occur on aging skin

DEAR DR. GOTT: Scaly patches are developing all over my back and face. I'm 69. My doctor calls it keratosis and says to just scrape it off. Well, that hurts. What else can I do?

DEAR READER: Keratosis are scaly raised discolorations that develop on aging skin. They are very common and no one, to my knowledge, knows their cause. As you have discovered, they are painful to scrape off. Therefore, I disagree with your doctor about this method of treatment.

Since keratosis are entirely benign and constitute only a cosmetic problem, I usually urge my patients to leave them alone. If the skin lesions arise at friction points, such as on belt lines or under bra straps, they can be surgically removed in a simple office procedure. However, new ones tend to grow back, so surgical removal may be an ongoing commitment.

DEAR DR. GOTT: The doctors said I had nephritis. My kidneys have lost 20 percent of function. Are they correct that there is nothing I can do to slow down or correct this condition?

Progressive kidney disease is a hard pill to swallow for a 33-year-old mother with a 1-year-old baby.

DEAR READER: The answer to your question depends on the type of nephritis (kidney inflammation) that you have. Nephritis can be hereditary (Alport's syndrome) and untreatable except by dialysis or kidney transplant, or it may be secondary to infection, drugs or chemicals. For example, post-streptococcal nephritis is self-limited and requires no treatment (except antibiotics for strep infection); complete recovery is the rule. Drug-induced nephritis is probably the consequence of allergic reac-

tions to certain medicines. Almost all antibiotics can cause this, as can anti-inflammatory agents, such as aspirin, and heavy metals, such as lead. Treatment depends on the cause.

You should be under the care of a nephrologist, a kidney specialist. Progressive renal disease is, indeed, an unattractive proposition; however, there is much that can be done to spare you from this complication.

To give you more information, I am sending you a free copy of my Health Report on KIDNEY DISORDERS. 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: Whenever I eat barbecued food I get really violent diarrhea. What could cause it?

DEAR READER: Probably a component of the barbecue sauce. Check labels to identify the potential culprit, avoid certain brands of sauce, give up barbecue entirely — or simply accept the diarrhea as a side effect of your dietary preference.

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DEAR MEG



Meg Whitcomb

Wife inquires about infidelity

DEAR MEG — My friend's husband and my husband have worked in the same office for nine years. Let's call her husband Fred.

My husband tells me everything, and has been telling me for years that Fred's been messing around with the girls at the company. It's a huge firm, and by the sound of it, Fred has had affairs with dozens of women over the years.

His wife is a nifty dame. Great

looking, a wonderful cook and hostess, and a loving mother. I don't know why Fred is unfaithful when he's got such an angel at home.

The other day, she surprised me by asking if Fred played around. She said she didn't want to be the last to know. I feel I should be honest, but my husband says I shouldn't say anything. — P.D. IN SILICON VALLEY, CALIF.

DEAR P.D. — I doubt your friend would have asked the question if she didn't already suspect something was going on. Your husband should tell Fred she is asking you questions, but that you have said nothing. That will get you off the hook.

DEAR MEG — My 16-year-old brother-in-law is always in trouble with the law. He's been in and out of juvenile centers for years and is now in an upstate facility for assault and battery.

My husband and I just bought our first home. It has a rentable basement that I'm fixing up so we can put a tenant in. But last week, my husband told his brother he could move in when he is released in May.

He wants to help his brother, but I don't want this boy living with us and our baby son. He has no self-control, and the thought of having him in the same house makes me very nervous. My husband and I are arguing about this. Please give us some advice before I go crazy from worry. — SCARED

DEAR SCARED — This advice is for your husband:

You will not solve your brother's problems by creating one of your own. Your first responsibility is to your wife and family. Please find another way to help your brother.

Meg's booklet "Breaking Out of the Loneliness Trap" is available for \$1 from DEAR MEG, in care of this newspaper, P.O. Box 91428, Cleveland, OH 44101-3428.

Canning shortcut may spoil food

By Polly Fisher

DEAR POLLY — My father-in-law has been doing his own canning for the past two years. He says he cans tomatoes by cooking them, then putting them into hot jars and turning the jars upside down for 15 minutes or so. He says they seal just fine and you don't have to process them, as the canning books state. I have been canning for 28 years and I have never heard of doing it his way. Is it safe? I think he is wrong, but I need someone to back me up on this one. — DELORES

DEAR DELORES — Your father-in-law's method IS NOT SAFE! Even though the jars may seal, the tomatoes inside could still spoil. Process-

ing in a boiling water bath raises the temperature of the tomatoes to a point that kills various yeasts and molds that contribute to spoilage. If these yeasts and molds are not destroyed — and they may not be if you use your father-in-law's method — the tomatoes could spoil and become unsafe to eat.

Also, even though your father-in-law's jars have sealed so far, this is not a good way to ensure a good seal. The high heat of the boiling water bath is necessary to ensure sealing. Also, turning jars upside down after processing is not recommended because it can break the seal.

The correct method for processing tomatoes, as I'm sure you know, is to put the filled and closed jars in a boiling water bath for 35 minutes for pints and 45 minutes for quarts.



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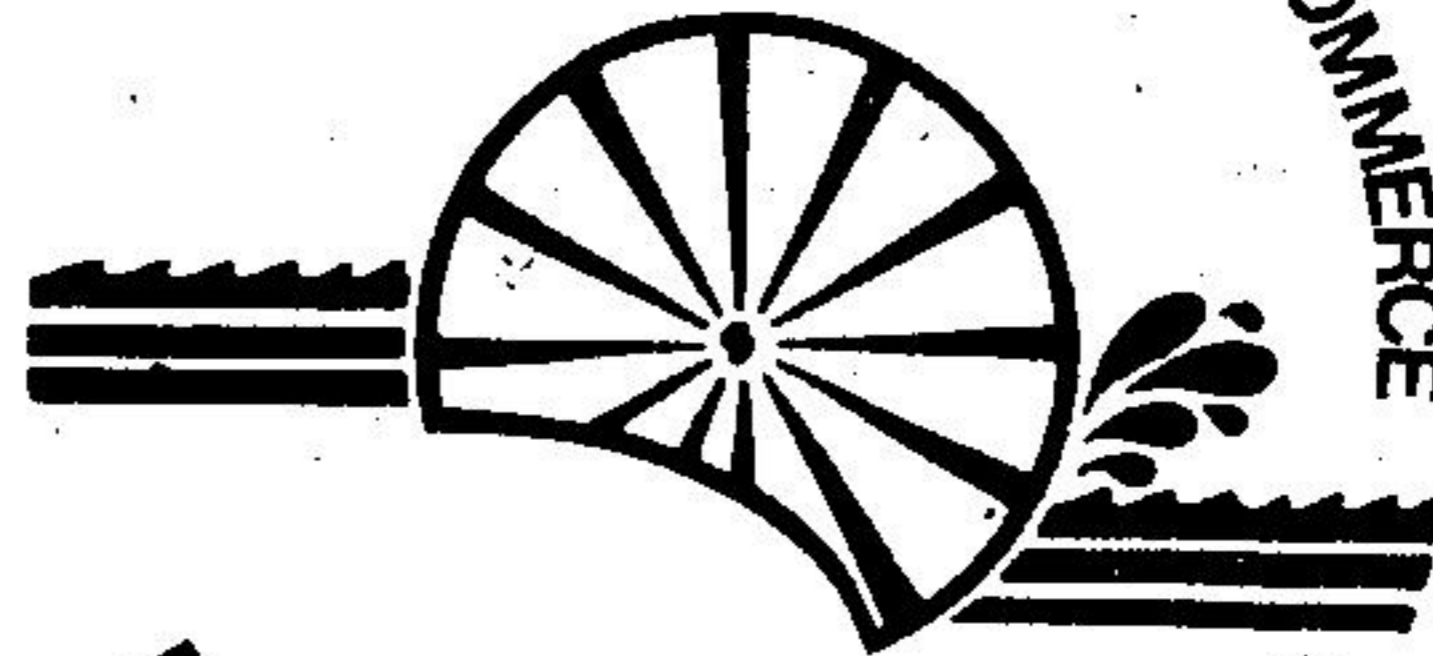
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