

## Monday, Monday Can't Trust That Day With apologies to the Mamas and the Papas

**TO THE EDITORS:** I awoke this morning from a horrible nightmare in which I imagined that I had experienced the worst day ever at the office. On the one hand, it seemed so real, yet it obviously has no relationship whatsoever to reality. What could have caused this bizarre episode? Do I need an immediate PET brain scan?

**8:20 am: Receive a call from a fellowship applicant. Grab a screening sheet and pen.**

"Dr. Lear? Hi, this is Dr. Jones. My wife just got herself a job in your town and we'll be moving there around May. I was wondering about your fellowship program in nuclear medicine."

*Motivation: above average*

"Preparatory training? You mean medical stuff?"

*Language proficiency: excellent*

"Well, I did a year of surgical internship, then a year of psychiatric residency, and now I'm in an anesthesiology program."

*Experience: diverse*

"Now this two years, it isn't really two whole years, is it? I mean, I have a lot of previous training."

*Commitment: I give up.*

**9:40 am: Called by receiving.**

"Dr. Lear, there's a truck here from Ace shipping with a new gamma camera. Not yours? None for the past six years? Huh. Wait a minute. Oh, sorry, its for cardiology."

**10:20 am: Have a conversation with a friend who is chief of nuclear medicine at a famous medical center of whom I inquire as to how they maintain referrals from certain clinical divisions.**

"Jim, what we do is to sign up the interested ones for two years of credit in our program. It doesn't cost us anything since they get their faculty salary from their own department. No, they don't spend much time with us but they send patients to us and most are able to pass the boards."

*Now I know why they have so many certified nuclear medicine physicians contributing to their fame.*

**11:15 am: The hospital director finally returns my call after 3 years.**

"Great news, Dr. Lear! I think we can put that PET scanner you've been asking for in our budget within the next few years. Of course, you do realize that you'll have to switch your NIH grant from basic research to clinical PET and that your capital budget will be used up for the next 14 or 15 years."

**11:50 am: Phone call is referred to me by the hospital switchboard.**

"Dr. Lear? You're the chief of nuclear medicine at the University? Hi, I'm Dave Smith. I was wondering if I might spend a

few days with you to see how you do some of your studies. I'm opening an imaging office down the street and my NRC license isn't due in for another week. Nuclear medicine training? Oh, I took this mail order physics course and did my clinical preceptorship with an old retired buddy of mine over at his place in California."

**12:30 pm: Get back from lunch and listen to voice mail from my wife.**

"Jim, you know those radioactive rats that they sent back from the disposal site in Idaho and that you brought home because you didn't know what to do with them. Well, I was putting them down the toilet and one got jammed and what should I tell the plumber?"

**1:50 pm: My chief tech needs to talk privately with me.**

"Jim, sorry but I've decided to go work for Siemens as an applications specialist and I'll be starting next month. Maybe by then the hiring freeze will be over. Recent tech applicants? Well there was that person last summer, or was it the summer before? Anyway, I can go check the file; maybe he would still be interested."

**3:10 pm: Receive a call regarding scheduling a study.**

"Hi, this is Dr. Madison. I'm a new resident in neurology and I was wondering if I could schedule a functional brain study on one of my patients."

*Finally!*

"Now, on this request sheet, how do I spell 'spectroscopy'?"

**4:30 pm: Receive call from our administrator regarding her briefing on the new Medicare fee schedule.**

"Hi, Dr. Lear, Good news! You don't have to worry about the rate cuts in nuclear medicine. They said that you'll be able to make up the loss through increased utilization."

**9:45 pm: Called at home by hospital maintenance.**

"Dr. Lear? Are you the one with that big computer network room down in the basement! Good, then you're the guy I need to talk to. There was this pipe up in the first floor men's room ..."

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## The Importance of a Delayed Scan in Thallium Imaging

**TO THE EDITOR:** I am writing in reference to the recent article by Aktolun et al. in the July issue of the *Journal*, about  $^{99m}\text{Tc}$ -MIBI and  $^{201}\text{Tl}$  uptake in pulmonary actinomycosis (1). The authors reported a case of pulmonary actinomycosis infection