

**THE JOURNAL OF NUCLEAR MEDICINE** (ISSN 0161-5505) is published monthly by the Society of Nuclear Medicine Inc., 1850 Samuel Morse Drive, Reston, VA 20190-5316. Periodicals Postage Paid at New York, NY and additional mailing offices. *Postmaster*, send address changes to *The Journal of Nuclear Medicine*, 1850 Samuel Morse Drive, Reston, VA 20190-5316.

**EDITORIAL COMMUNICATIONS** should be sent to the Editor: Stanley J. Goldsmith, MD, *The Journal of Nuclear Medicine*, New York Hospital-Cornell Medical Center, 525 E. 68th St., Box 311, New York, NY 10021. Phone: (212)746-9066; Fax: (212)746-9056. *Books and monographs* covering the use of nuclear medicine and its allied disciplines will be reviewed as space is available. *Send review copies to the Editor.*

**BUSINESS COMMUNICATIONS** concerning advertising and permission requests should be sent to the publisher, Society of Nuclear Medicine, 1850 Samuel Morse Drive, Reston, VA 20190-5316; (703) 708-9000; home page address: [www.snm.org](http://www.snm.org). Subscription requests and change of address should be sent to: Membership Department, Society of Nuclear Medicine at the address above. Notify the Society of change of address and telephone number at least 30 days before date of issue by sending both the old and the new addresses. Claims for copies lost in the mails are allowed within 90 days of the date of issue. Claims are not allowed for issues lost as a result of insufficient notice of change of address. Advertisements are subject to editorial approval and are restricted to products or services pertinent to nuclear medicine. Advertising rates are available from the publisher. Closing date is the first of the month preceding the date of issue.

**SUBSCRIPTION RATES** for 1997 calendar year are \$170 within the United States; \$180 for Canada and Pan American countries; \$210 elsewhere. Student subscriptions are \$70 (with proof of student status). Single copies \$15.00; foreign \$18.00; convention issue (May) \$18.00; foreign \$20.00. Make checks payable to the Society of Nuclear Medicine. Sales of individual back copies of 1992 through the current issue of *JNM* are available through Matthews Medical Books, 11559 Rock Island Court, Maryland Heights, MO 63043, (800)633-2665 or (314) 432-1401. Readers requesting back copies prior to 1992 should contact the SNM Publications Department (703-708-9000) for availability and pricing information.

**COPYRIGHT** © 1997 by the Society of Nuclear Medicine, Inc. All rights reserved. No part of this work may be reproduced or translated without permission from the copyright owner. Because the copyright on articles published in *The Journal of Nuclear Medicine* is held by the Society, each author of accepted manuscripts must sign a statement transferring copyright. See Information for Authors for further explanation. (See pages 41A and 42A in the March 1997 issue.)

## His Patient, My Son

**T**he attending physician was wonderful. He was well-trained, comfortable with the clinical situation, sensitive to the patient, his anxious family and the special situation of a father who was also a physician. He had already asked my son if he consented to his discussing "the case" with me.

He was pleasant, even cordial but serious, open and direct. He told me his assessment of the clinical situation and what he proposed to do that day to stabilize and correct the cardiac rhythm. Through the dense concern which clouded my consciousness, I heard an extremely competent presentation. There was no confusion or uncertainty. It all rang true. In fact, although no longer my area of involvement, the clinical plan was exactly what I remembered it to be from my days as a resident in Medicine, allowing, of course, for the new pharmacology.

I felt assured that my son was in good hands. I could go to work, attend to my responsibilities and return later. I was pleased that his physician knew the special problem so well and seemed to belong to that special fraternity of caring, competent physicians. Yes, he cared for his patients; a bond, the doctor-patient bond had been established between him and his patient, my son.

However, did he know how special this man, his patient, my son, was to me? Did he know that this set of vital signs physical findings, informed consent, EKG, x-rays and chemistries was so special to me? He had never held him in his arms as a baby, thrown a ball to him, swam with him or went to hockey or baseball games with him. He had not loaded the family car with belongings and dropped them all off at the college dormitory nor watched him with pride as a graduate in cap and gown or as a groom in white tie and tails. He had never shoveled snow with him, mowed the lawn or painted a ceiling. Now, he was a patient, and I was an anxious father, not unlike other anxious fathers and family members whom I see regularly.

Everything turned out well. The normal rhythm returned later that day. The abnormal rhythm did not recur when the intravenous medication was discontinued nor later when the oral medication was stopped. No underlying organic cause for the "spontaneous arrhythmia" was found.

It all went well, although I would have preferred not to have been reminded that all of our patients are someone's son, daughter, husband, wife, mother, father, sister, brother or significant other. In this case, he was his patient, but he was my son.

**Stanley J. Goldsmith, MD**  
*Editor-in-Chief, The Journal of Nuclear Medicine*  
April 1997