

As I approach my seventy-fifth race around the Sun, I obviously spend a lot of time trying to figure out what I want to be when I grow up. A couple of recent experiences has helped me to cross off my list of things I could do of anything connected to the medical profession.

There will not be any fancy letters next to my name in my future to be sure.

It's not that I'm not smart enough to be a medical person - that was already established in my world by the third grade - it's more a matter of my anxiety level when anything involving medical issues comes my way.

Here are two examples of how I work.

My retirement job - yes, I believe the government determined that it would be best for the country if they simply paid me NOT to go to work anymore until I figure out what I want to be - is working four hours every morning at the Zoo. It's a great job that gives me a little extra cash.

My doctor told me she wanted me to start taking my blood pressure and keep track of it in-between doctor visits and call her if it ever gets a bit too high.

No problemo, I thought. We have a great EMS team at the Zoo that would be happy to help me keep up with the old ticker.

So when I went in and asked them to take my BP reading, as it is called, the young lady got me all set up, pumped me up and withing a few minutes, I was headed back to work.

Before I left, however, she told me they have a BP machine I could buy and do it at home whenever I want.

"I'm not going to buy all that and try to figure out how to wrap that thingy around my arm, pump that rubber football thingy and hold the listening thingy plugged into my ears to see what numbers I have!"

She looked at me with a curious expression before telling me they have machines that you simply put your arm through the sleeve, push a button and the machine does everything else.

"I see .... How long has that been available?"

Her expression does not change as she tells me people have been doing it for years now.

"I see.... I should check that out .... thanks!"

Of course, it wasn't long before I realized that just about every store on this planet has BP

machines. My grocery store, pharmacy, WalMart.... well, I'm happy to report that I can now take my BP any time I want in the comfort of my own home.

Welcome to the 21<sup>st</sup> century, old man.

The second reason I will never be cut out for the medical profession came the other day.

My doctor told me that she wanted me to do one more colon screening before my 75<sup>th</sup> because they don't recommend it any more after you are 75 years old - I guess after 75, they really don't care if you get cancer or not.

I have visions of the last colon test I had when I was fifty and I'm guessing she saw my panicked pale expression and told me since I have no history of problems, she'd be okay with ordering me a kit I could use at home and if it comes out clean, we'll leave it at that.

So the box was delivered to me on Friday, so I have the whole weekend of building my anxiety level, since you have to poop and send back within 24 hours, so don't do it on the weekend they tell me.

After a weekend of constant anxiety-driven questions swirling in my mind .... should I do it after my second cup of coffee? ... should I eat a healthy breakfast before I poop? .... should I not have any wine the night before? ... What if my poop is the wrong color? .... what color of poop is the best? .... well, my anxiety level can get the best of me, I suppose. Anyway, I got myself all ready to poop for the advancement of medical science and to be honest, it really wasn't that big a deal. They will get my poop exactly they way they told me to do it and now my anxiety is in having to walk into the UPS store with a box that EVERYONE knows has my poop in it to send it back to the lab.

I take comfort in knowing that this poop episode is behind me now, and I'm now preoccupied thinking about the poor sap who is about to receive my box of poop. He has fancy letters after his name, but I can't imagine how much fun he has at dinner parties.

“So what do you do for a living, doctor?”

“Oh, I work in a lab, researching a bunch of sh\*t”

“Oh really? What kind of sh%t?”

“Have you tried those hush puppies over there? I'm not sure how she makes them, but they are great! Hey, great talking to you.”