

TO YOUR GOOD HEALTH

Can heart surgery cause hot flashes?

DEAR DR. ROACH: I have had

toms. I also found that, indeed, the autonomic nervous system (the part of the nervous system that regulates temperature, sweat, blood pressure and many other critical aspects of body function without our being consciously aware of it) can be adversely affected by cardiac surgery. Some authors have suggested that the autonomic nervous system changes are one mechanism by which people are more likely to have depression after

people complain of similar symp-

DEAR DR. ROACH: Can you explain the condition known as "stone shoulder"? I am a man, 67 years old, and I believe I have it. I spent 45 years as a TV news photographer, handling heavy cameras, tripods, etc. - B.J.

ANSWER: "Stone shoulder" is a new one for me. Maybe you mean frozen shoulder, a condition also called "adhesive capsulitis." It's not a strictly accurate term, since the loss of movement the name implies is gradual. It starts with shoulder pain, often worse at night, lasting for months. Stiffness develops, and then the loss of shoulder movement can be severe. A careful physical exam by a regular doctor, a rheumatologist or sports medicine doctor, or an orthopedic surgeon can make the diagnosis. Often, the doctor will inject a steroid and anesthetic into the shoulder: The pain relief and improved movement within a minute make the diagnosis. I refer patients to physical therapy for a gradually increasing exercise regimen. Sometimes, additional injections are necessary. In your case, I would worry about a rotator cuff tear or inflammation, which you also might have acquired while doing your job. A careful exam usually can distinguish these. Occasionally, an MRI is required.



hot flashes, similar to those experienced by post-menopausal women, ever since my coronary bypass in 1990. I can be sitting quietly in a chair reading or at my computer, and suddenly I find myself dripping with perspiration. I also have had panic attacks, with increased heart rate and other physical symptoms. A few years ago, a 24-hour EKG showed heart-rhythm irregularities and that my heart stopped briefly while asleep.

If these idiosyncrasies of my autonomic nervous system are a consequence of my time on the heart-lung machine for the bypass, I'm not complaining — just curious. You said that studies have been done on almost everything. Is this one? - W.S.B.

ANSWER: I found that a lot of

cardiac surgery. I found several possible explanations why the ANS changes with bypass surgery, but no clear consensus.

I would want to be sure that there are no other causes of these symptoms. It sounds like you have had an extensive evaluation, but I certainly would be concerned about a sudden fast heart rhythm, such as atrial fibrillation.

The booklet on abnormal heart rhythms explains atrial fibrillation and the more common heart rhythm disturbances in greater detail. Readers can obtain a copy by writing: Dr. Roach — No. 107W, 628 Virginia Drive, Orlando, FL 32803. Enclose a check or money order (no cash) for \$4.75 U.S./\$6. Canada with the recipient's printed name and address. Please allow four weeks for delivery.

SALOME'S STARS

ARIES (March 21 to April 19) You might feel that you have all the answers right now. But it might be wise to listen to other ideas before you decide to close the lid on other possibilities.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20) Bovines give and expect loyalty, so it might not be easy to reconcile with someone you feel let you down. Why not ask a neutral party to set up a clear-the-air meeting?

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20) Anticipating the holidays with family and friends fuels your must-do Gemini energies. But try to pace yourself so you'll be up for whatever comes along later.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22)

More background information might come through regarding a decision you expect to make. Be sure to check the source carefully before you move.

LEO (July 23 to August 22) The strong, nurturing nature of the Lion comes through this week as you reach out to family and friends in need of your warm and loving support.

VIRGO (August 23 to September 22) A relationship that has almost totally unraveled could be close to being restored with more effort on your part to be more patient and less judgmental.

LIBRA (September 23 to October 22) Your sense of fair play is strong this week, which can cause a problem with a longtime relationship. But in the end, you'll know what decision to make.

SCORPIO (October 23 to November 21) You might not know all the facts behind an unwelcome development, so keep that Scorpion temper in check and resist lashing out at anyone.

SAGITTARIUS (November 22 to December 21) This is a good time to reinforce relationships - family, friends, colleagues — that might have been overlooked in recent years.

CAPRICORN (December 22 to January 19) Family situations continue to thrive. Business associations also improve. Some holiday plans might have to be shifted a bit. Be flexible.

AQUARIUS (January 20 to February 18) Avoid any influence of negative energy in this week's aspect by not allowing small problems to grow into large ones. Work them out immediately.

PISCES (February 19 to March 20) A friend might need advice on how to deal with a challenge to his or her moral values. And who better than you to give the honest answer? Good luck.

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