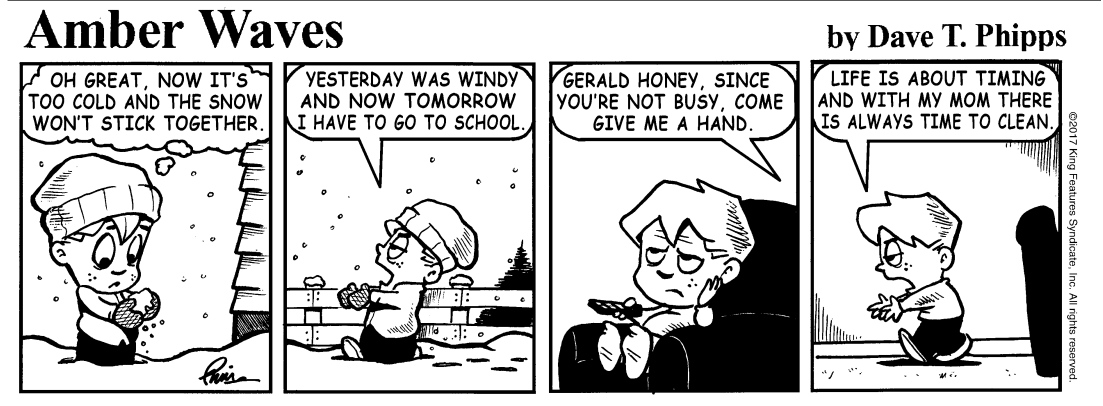
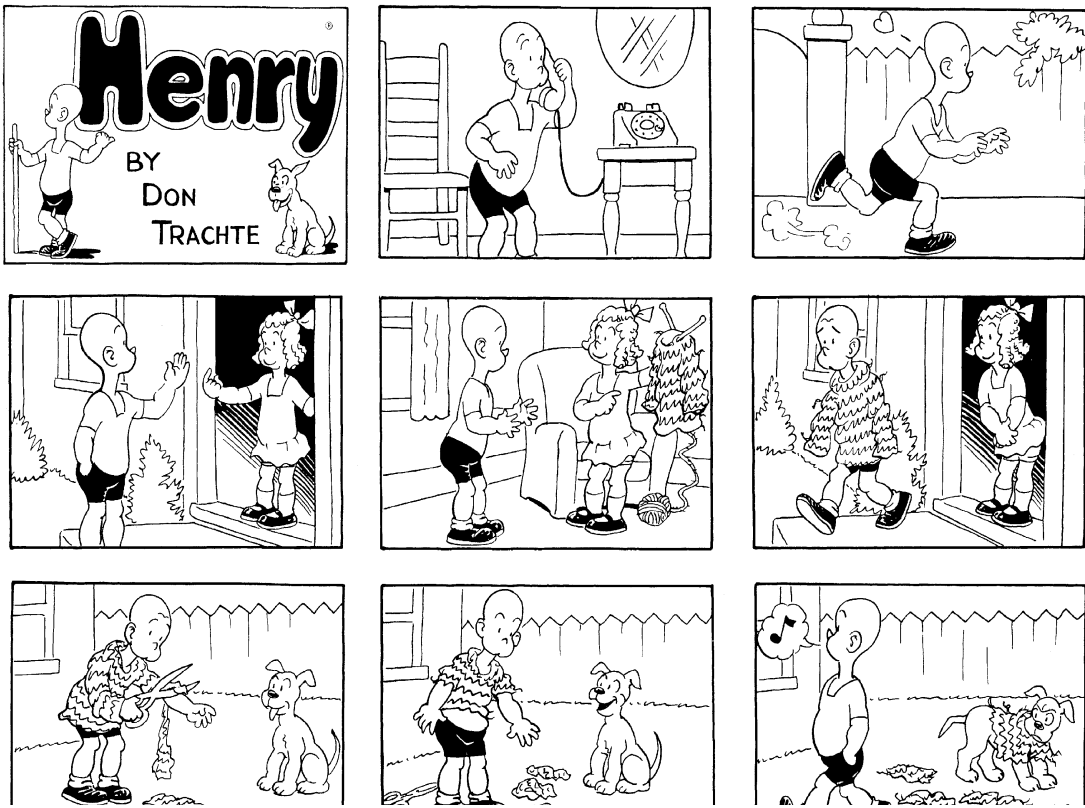
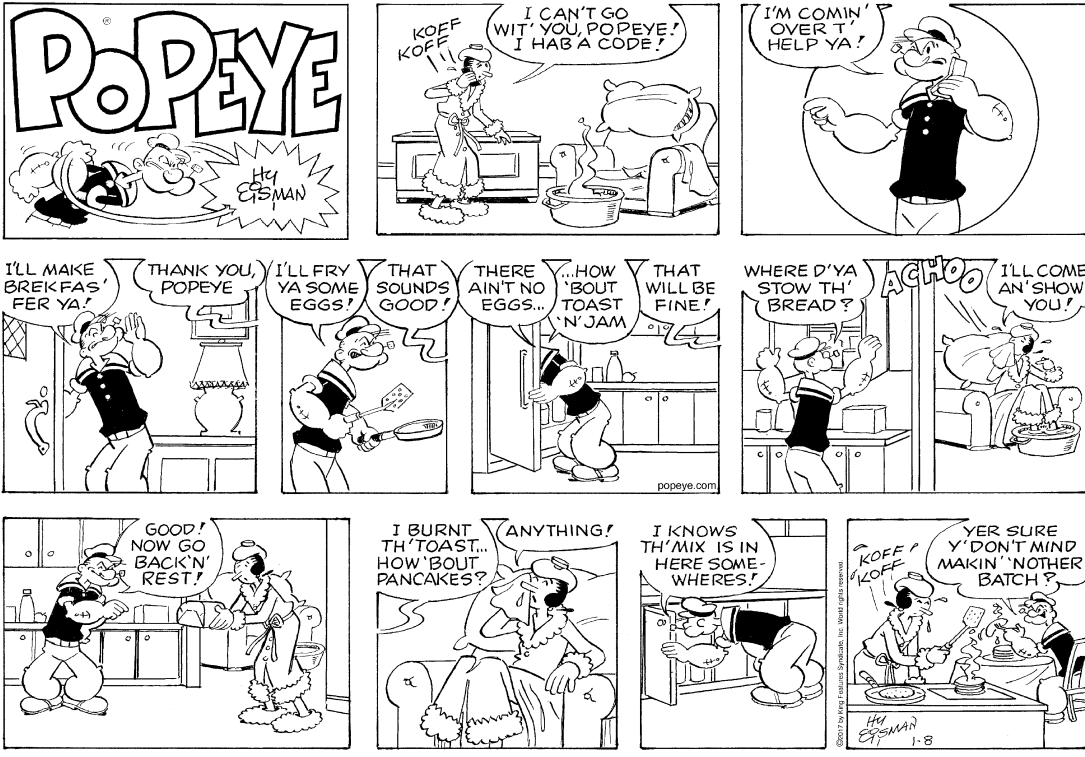


# SIDE SHOW



## TO YOUR GOOD HEALTH

### Blood test results wildly different

DEAR DR. ROACH: I went in for an annual examination with my primary-care doctor, and she had my blood tested at a laboratory. She told me that I have high potassium, 5.5, and had me retake it. I did, and the test came back with a much lower level of 4.3! What could have caused the level to go up so high? Was this due to eating a lot of avocado and yogurt? I was eating a whole avocado for breakfast and a yogurt with apple and peach. Should I be seeing a specialist to recheck it? Please advise what I should do. -- A.V.R.

ANSWER: Avocados and yogurt are high-potassium foods, and peaches and apples are medium-potassium foods. Most people can take in high amounts of potassium

without worry, since the kidney is very good at getting rid of potassium if the body doesn't need it. I more often see low potassium levels, from poor intake or from medications, such as diuretics, which can cause the body to lose potassium. However, some people with kidney disease (especially severe kidney disease) need to carefully watch and limit oral potassium intake.

By far the biggest reason for a potassium blood test to come out abnormally high relates to the lab itself. Samples that sit around a long time or that are shaken will have broken blood cells, which release high levels of potassium into the serum, causing false elevations in the lab. If you didn't change your diet between the two tests, there is no reason to worry at all.

Your primary doctor is the right person to see. DEAR DR. ROACH: I have chronic constipation, and have had this most of my life. I have used most of the bulking (husk) things that are out there. Nothing works for me. Years ago, I went to my doctor, and he said that I could use MiraLAX and use it for the rest of my life. It has worked! Now my new

doctor wants me off of it, wants me to incorporate fiber into my diet. I already do this. Plus I drink a lot of water in a day. I start my day with 24 ounces of water every morning before anything else. Is there anything wrong with taking MiraLAX every day? I do not take the full dose. -- V.B.

ANSWER: While I recommend non-drug treatments, such as increased water intake, high-fiber diet and exercise, as treatment for constipation, that doesn't work for everybody. In that case, using a medication as recommended by your doctor makes sense. Polyethylene glycol (MiraLAX) is a generally safe treatment that works by increasing fluid in the bowel. It's a good idea to use it as little as is needed to keep the stool from getting uncomfortably hard.

READERS: The booklet on constipation explains this common disorder and its treatments. Readers can obtain a copy by writing: Dr. Roach -- No. 504W, 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 4-6 weeks for delivery.

## SALOME'S STARS

ARIES (March 21 to April 19) Guess what, Lamb? You're about to experience a new perspective on a situation you long regarded quite differently. What you learn could open more opportunities later.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20) The Bold Bovine is tempted to charge into a new venture. But it might be best to take things one step at a time, so that you know just where you are at any given point.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20) It's a good time to go on that fun getaway you've been planning. You'll return refreshed, ready and, yes, even eager to tackle the new challenge that awaits you.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22) The Moon Child loves to fantasize about

magical happenings in the early part of the week. But the sensible Crab gets down to serious business by week's end.

LEO (July 23 to August 22) What goes around comes around for those lucky Leos and Leonas whose acts of generosity could be repaid with opportunities to expand into new and exciting areas of interest.

VIRGO (August 23 to September 22) Your concern about your job responsibilities is commendable. But you need to take some quiet time to share with someone who has really missed being with you.

LIBRA (September 23 to October 22) Aspects favor getting out and meeting new people. And as a bonus, you might find that some of your newly made friends could offer important business contacts.

SCORPIO (October 23 to November 21) You might take pride in wanting to do everything yourself. But now's a good time to ask family members to

help with a demanding personal situation.

SAGITTARIUS (November 22 to December 21) Pay more attention to the possibilities in that workplace change. It could show the way to make that long-sought turn on your career path.

CAPRICORN (December 22 to January 19) Your need to succeed might overwhelm obligations to your loved ones. Ease up on that workload and into some well-deserved time with family and friends.

AQUARIUS (January 20 to February 18) Love rules for amorous Aquarians who can make good use of their ability to communicate feelings. Don't be surprised if they're reciprocated in kind.

PISCES (February 19 to March 20) Fishing for compliments? No doubt, you probably earned them. But it's best to let others believe they were the ones who uncovered the treasure you really are.

### King Crossword

ACROSS

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### King Crossword

Answers

Solution time: 21 mins.

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E	Y	E	S	S	E	N	Y	E	L	P			

Just Like Cats & Dogs by Dave T. Phipps

OK, WE'RE TAKING A WALK TO GET OUTSIDE AND GET SOME FRESH AIR... WE ARE OUTSIDE RIGHT?

Siuslaw News

READ IT TODAY!