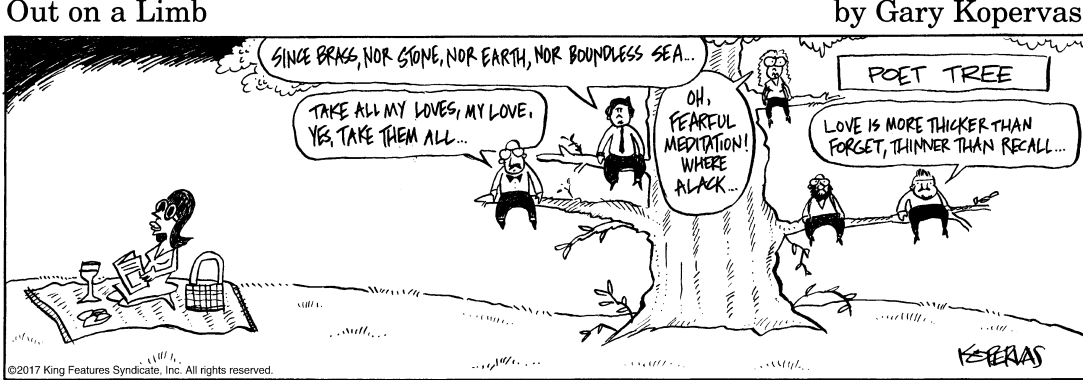
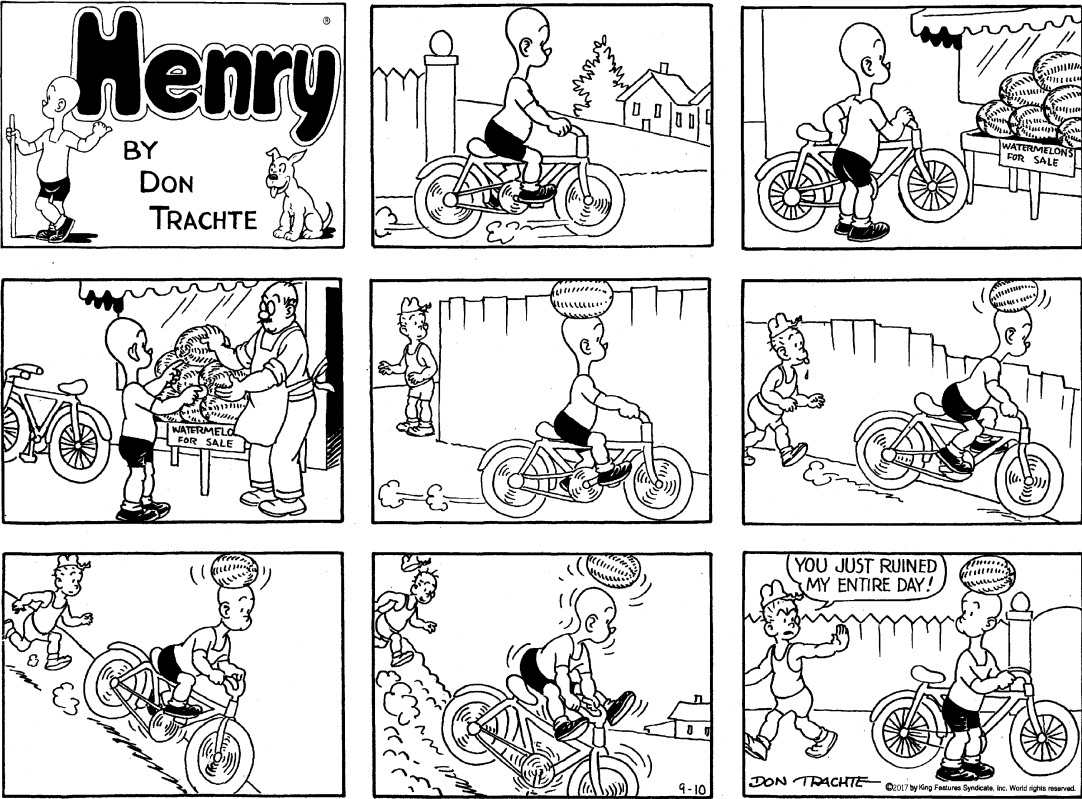


SIDE SHOW



TO YOUR GOOD HEALTH

Mixed Signals on Heart Rhythms

DEAR DR. ROACH: I am a 75-year-old man who recently experienced three episodes of lightheadedness. After testing, my cardiologist determined that these were not likely to be cardiac in origin. My concern is with the result of my 24-hour Holter monitor, which showed a little more than 1,000 isolated PVCs in 24 hours. I have been told that this is either “dire” or “not an issue.” I would appreciate your comments on this and any discussion of treatment for frequent PVCs. -- J.G.

ANSWER: Normally in the heart, the electrical impulse starts at the sinoatrial node, often called the pacemaker of the heart. The impulse proceeds down clearly defined pathways (think of them as wires) to the atrioventricular node, where it waits for the mechanics of the heart to catch up with the electrical system. The electrical im-

pulse then travels down the bundle of His to the Purkinje fibers, which stimulate the ventricle.

Occasionally, in everybody, an electrical impulse will come from a different part of the heart before the normal SA impulse. If it comes from the atria, it is called a premature atrial contraction; and if it's from the much larger ventricles, a premature ventricular contraction. These are clearly distinguishable on an EKG. A PAC is early and narrow (since the impulse will go through the AV node), while a PVC is early and wide (since it does not, and must travel cell to cell).

My opinion is that frequent PVCs at your level is somewhere between “not an issue” and “dire.” One study showed that people who had no known heart disease but more than 30 PVCs an hour (720 in 24 hours) have an increased risk of heart disease over people with fewer than 30 per hour. The overall increase in risk is not large in absolute terms, however.

Although there is treatment that can reduce PVCs, it's not clear that this reduces the risk of heart disease, and some treatments actually increase mortality risk. I recommend treatment for frequent PVCs only if there are very bothersome

symptoms that are clearly related to the PVCs, or in the very infrequent event of someone with so many PVCs that the fast heart rate damages the heart.

The booklet on abnormal heart rhythms explains 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.

DEAR DR. ROACH: What is Demodex of the eyelashes? Can it affect other parts of the body? Is it deadly? -- Anon.

ANSWER: Demodex folliculorum is a mite, a small (0.1 mm) arthropod that lives on human skin in hair follicles. There is debate whether they cause disease, specifically inflammation of the eyelids. Most opinions I read suggest they do not. However, there are reports of eye symptoms in some people with more than usual amounts of Demodex, which can be treated with medication. In most people, Demodex is considered part of the normal flora, like the bacteria and fungi we carry around as well.

SALOME'S STARS

ARIES (March 21 to April 19) This is a good time for the usually outspoken Lamb to be a bit more discreet. You still can get your point across, but do it in a way less likely to turn off a potential supporter.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20) Good news: All that hard work you put in is beginning to pay off. But you need to watch that tendency to insist on doing things your way or no way. Be a bit more flexible.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20) You might want to delay making a decision on the future of a long-standing relationship until you check out some heretofore hidden details that are just now beginning to emerge.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22) Your reluctance to compromise on an im-

portant issue could backfire without more facts to support your position. Weigh your options carefully before making your next move.

LEO (July 23 to August 22) This is a good time for ambitious Leos or Leonas to shift from planning their next move to actually doing it. Your communication skills help persuade others to join you.

VIRGO (August 23 to September 22) Relationships -- personal or professional -- present new challenges. Be careful not to let a sudden surge of stubbornness influence how you choose to deal with them.

LIBRA (September 23 to October 22) You might need more facts before you can decide on a possible career change. But you should have no problem making a decision about an important personal matter.

SCORPIO (October 23 to November 21) You're respected by most people for your direct, no-nonsense approach to the issues. But be careful

you don't replace honest skepticism with stinging sarcasm.

SAGITTARIUS (November 22 to December 21) A newly emerging situation could require a good deal of attention and some difficult decision-making. However, close friends will help you see it through.

CAPRICORN (December 22 to January 19) Family matters need attention. Check things out carefully. There still might be unresolved tensions that could hinder your efforts to repair damaged relationships.

AQUARIUS (January 20 to February 18) Of course you deserve to indulge yourself in something special. But for now, tuck that bit of mad money away. You'll need it to help with a looming cash crunch.

PISCES (February 19 to March 20) A temporary setback in your financial situation is eased by changing some of your plans. You'll be able to ride it out quite well until the tide turns back in your favor.

King Crossword

ACROSS

1 Fragrant wood

6 Construction piece

11 "Seinfeld" role

12 Had to have

14 Eden, for one

15 Look

16 Card player's call

17 Barbecue brand

19 Guitar's cousin

20 Dunkable treat

22 Very long time

23 Oft-torn knee parts, briefly

24 Bold

26 Block and tackle parts

28 Listener

30 Moray, e.g.

31 Epicure

35 Takes to the links

39 Unseat

40 Moving truck

42 Turnpike payment

43 Multipurpose truck

44 Picture puzzle

46 "Gosh!"

47 Risk

49 Roamed freely

DOWN

1 Danes or Forlani

2 Breadwinner

3 Accomplished

4 From the beginning

5 Actress Zellweger

6 Naive girl, theatrically

7 Tolerate

8 "Hallow" ending

9 Offer as example

10 In a submissive way

11 Incite

13 Frock

18 Jazzy style

21 Open to view

23 Apportion

25 Thanksgiving veggie

27 Journey segment

29 One of P-R-N-D-L

31 Cheese

choice

32 Power failure

33 Early online forum

34 Bill

36 Actor Robert of "Big"

37 Like some winter coats

38 Coasters

41 Hospital employee

44 On pension (Abbr.)

45 H.S. hurdles

48 Wildebeest

50 Phone bk. data

© 2017 King Features Synd., Inc.

King Crossword

Answers

Solution time: 24 mins.

CEDAR IBEAM

ELAINE NEEDED

GARDEN GANDER

GIN WEBER UKE

OREO EON ACLS

NERVY PULLEYS

EAR EEL

GOURMET GOLFS

OUST VAN TOLL

UTE REBUS GEE

DANGER RANGED

AGENTS STOICS

ETUDE ESSAY

Just Like Cats & Dogs

by Dave T. Phipps

THE NEW FURNITURE COMES ON MONDAY. WE'RE GETTING RID OF THIS COUCH AND LAMP. WE'RE KEEPING THE REMOTE HOLDER.

Siusslaw News

READ IT TODAY!