

JOHN A. SCHMIDT JR., MD

INTERNAL MEDICINE

MEANINGFUL MEDICINE IN YOUR MEDICAL HOME



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Season's Greetings



Aah, Christmas!

No other season of the year evokes so many pleasant memories! To convince yourself, simply answer the following:

The Holly and the _____ (Ans: Ivy! - A traditional British [Christmas carol](#))

Angels we have heard on _____ (Ans: High! - from "[Angels We Have Heard on High](#)" based on a traditional French carol known as "Les Anges dans nos campagnes" (literally, "Angels in our countryside") composed by an unknown author in Languedoc, France.)

Fall on your _____ (Ans: Knees! - from "[O Holy Night](#)" a well-known Christmas carol composed by Adolphe Adam)

A _____ is born to us! (Ans: "[Child](#)" - from [Handel's Messiah](#))

Tiny _____! (Ans: Tim - from "[A Christmas Carol](#)" by Charles Dickens)

Cindy Lou _____ (Ans: Who! - from "[How the Grinch Stole Christmas](#)" by Dr. Seuss)

That's what Christmas is all _____, Charlie Brown! (Ans: about! - Linus in "[A Charlie Brown Christmas](#)," 1965)

He Ain't Heavy. He's my _____! (Ans: Brother! - A popular [Neil Diamond](#) song in 1970 it is the signature motto of Boy's and Girl's Town in Omaha, NE, where the Christmas spirit lives all year long!)

Can you still hear the _____? (Ans: Bell! - from "[The Polar Express](#)")

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One of the leading Internists in Monmouth County offering [Medical Home Services](#).

The [Nutcracker](#), Radio City, and Handel's Messiah! These and other memories fill the mind by the thousands and remind us of the sheer joy and happiness of the Season. Thank God for His gift of the Nativity!

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Remembering Danny Thomas!

Anyone familiar with "[The Christmas Carol](#)" by Charles Dickens knows that Scrooge had "successfully" blocked his Christmas memories because they reminded him of missed opportunities. The cure, as prescribed by the three ghosts, was to acknowledge his past mistakes and build a generous future.



Danny Thomas

A great modern example of someone who capitalized on failure was [Danny Thomas](#). He struggled as a young comedian. Success eluded him. But rather than despair, lose hope, and forsake God (as Scrooge did), he made a promise to [St. Jude](#), the patron saint of hopeless causes: "Help me find my way in life, and I will build you a shrine," he prayed in the back of a desolate church. And build a shrine he did!! That shrine is the great [St. Jude Children's Research Hospital](#) in Memphis, TN which has helped so many hopeless children return to health.

A little known fact is that most of the funding for St. Jude comes from the [American Lebanese Syrian Associated Charities](#) (ALSAC), the third largest healthcare related charity in the United States, founded by Danny Thomas, a Lebanese American, in 1957. At a time when many Americans feel victimized by the Middle East and its troubles, it is important to remember how much the Middle Eastern Peoples have contributed to our nation. In gratitude for our patients, the Americans whose roots are in the troubled Middle East, and the Christmas Season, the practice has sent our annual Christmas contribution to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital. Thank you!

"Our hearts grow tender with childhood memories and love of kindred, and we are better throughout the year for having, in spirit, become a child again."

- Laura Ingalls Wilder



Cognitive Decline in Diabetes

As discussed in many previous issues of this newsletter, diabetes damages almost every organ system. Now comes additional evidence. As published in the December 2 issue of the [Annals of Internal Medicine](#), diabetes contributes to [cognitive decline](#). Even those with [prediabetes](#) lose cognition more rapidly than those with [normal blood glucose](#). Conversely, those whose diabetes is controlled fare better. Bottom line: To [stay mentally sharp](#), take [steps to avoid diabetes](#). If you have it, control it! Together, we can do it!

Diabetes: Too much insulin!

Yes, you read it right! Most of my patients with adult onset diabetes make too much (not too little) insulin! I have the proof! [C-peptide](#), a split product of endogenous insulin, is markedly elevated in every one of my diabetic patients, even among those who inject insulin!! How can this be? The answer is that most Americans with diabetes make more than enough insulin. The problem is that their muscles have become insulin resistant. The pancreas tries to compensate by making more. The antidote? Regain normal sensitivity to insulin. How? Vigorous aerobic exercise helps your muscles regain their normal sensitivity to insulin so the pancreas does not have to work overtime.

Another Way of Looking at It

When we sit on our duff, calories go to the liver where they create havoc. When we exercise, excess calories are diverted to muscle where they are burned away before they can cause you harm.



Forward Looking Gift Giving!

You have all heard the expression: "The gift that keeps on giving!" Exercise is such a gift. Instead of a massage, challenge the ones

you love with a gift that will help them maintain their cognition. They will feel more relaxed, their complexion will take on a rosy hue, and they will sleep better at night. Exercise is _____ (Ans: Medicine!). Download apps that encourage vigorous aerobic exercise (such as [RunKeeper®](#)).

Testosterone-Replacement Therapy

Finally, men and women have something in common: [menopause](#) and [manopause](#). Just as women have wrestled with the pros and cons of [hormone replacement therapy](#) (HRT), men are now barraged with TV ads suggesting that everlasting virility can be found in an underarm testosterone cream. The pros and cons are discussed very eloquently in the November 20 issue of the [New England Journal of Medicine](#). Let me suggest another way of looking at the matter. If you are focused on the near-term, take the hormones. If you are more interested in the long-term, use them briefly or not at all, to reach your goals. Call me if you are considering testosterone for 2015!

Valerie and I are so grateful for you! Thank you for your cards and holiday wishes! We wish you every Happiness and Joy during this great Season of Hope. May God Bless you this year and for many, many more to come!



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