



Jennifer Layman, Publisher

## HealthMatters

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### A HEALTHY LAUGH

Brian, a hypochondriac, bumped into his doctor one day at the supermarket.

"Doc!" Brian exclaimed, "I've been meaning to tell you... remember those voices I kept hearing in my head? I haven't heard them in over a week!"

"Wow! What wonderful news Brian! I'm so happy for you!" his Dr. Exclaimed.

"Wonderful?" asked a dismal looking Brian. "There's nothing wonderful about it. I'm afraid my hearing is starting to go now!"

## Time To Go Offline

### The lure of self-diagnosing may cause more illness than cures

In December, I read a CBC story about a woman who was able to get a prescription for medical marijuana for her daughter. The mom had done "extensive research online" and felt this might be a solution to manage her child's often-violent behaviour.

The CBC story debated whether giving a child medical marijuana was a good option or a bad one, and that's not where I'm going in this column. My question is this: do people really know how to differentiate between good and bad information that they find online?

As an example, I Googled five "symptoms" to see what kind of health problem Google thought I could have. The symptoms were: constipation, poor memory, sinus congestion, frequent headaches and ADHD. Do you know what came up as an answer? Concussion, depression, carbon monoxide poisoning, lyme disease and a gluten allergy. And that was only the first two links!

Imagine taking medication for depression when you actually have lyme disease? Now you're not only treating the condition you actually had, but also now reversing the treatment you underwent for a condition you never had. That's no way to live.

Anyone can be an "expert" on the internet. All you have to do is start a blog and ramble on and on about a topic. As long as you use certain "key words" and link to things, Google will increase your ranking and you will become more of an "expert!" No knowledge or education required.

Does that sound like the kind of "expert" you want to trust with your health? If not, Health Matters offers you another year of real, live experts - real people with real education and hand-on experience! Call us old-fashioned, but we still think that a real person is a better option. I bet, you would agree.

Wishing you all a happy and healthy 2018.

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## QUOTABLE

"It's not about perfect. It's about effort. And when you bring that effort every single day, that's where transformation happens. That's how change occurs."

JILLIAN MICHAELS