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## What's In a Name?

Nancy Mink

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# What's In a Name? : University of Dayton, Ohio

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Monday March 4, 2024

## What's In a Name?

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By Nancy Mink

Names matter. For instance, would you rather live on Stinking Creek Road or Whispering Pines Lane? Do you prefer the area of Buzzard's Roost or Eagle View?

The name of my neighborhood is Stony Hollow, which is an apt spot for someone who was a child of the 1970s to reside. Obviously no longer a child, this baby boomer is thankfully in good general health. As time passes though, the annual physical exam with the doctor tends to add items to my medical history with names that, to be frank, are displeasing if not downright rude.

After reading test results for the persistent pain in my side, the doctor pronounced, "*Lazy Gallbladder*." Seriously? That sounds somewhat judgmental — talk about adding insult to injury! Of course, the unfortunate body part was not working properly, but is that a reason for name-calling? The next year *Fatty Liver* followed good old Lazy G. Enough said.

Where is my *Pirouette Syndrome* (made up diagnosis) or *Dolore al piede* (foot pain translated from Italian)? A dear friend has been diagnosed with *Epstein-Barr virus* and has been very fatigued. I truly am sorry for her troubles, but at least the name sounds like something given to smart people — perhaps a law student?

Please know that in no way do I wish to minimize the struggle of anyone with a beautifully named illness. You have my utmost respect and compassion. With that being said, the labels provided to me by medical professionals are clearly disappointing.

As previously mentioned, I am no spring chicken, but I don't believe I have yet crossed the line to elderly. Although one of the definitions of a dowager is "an elderly woman of stately dignity," I was fraught to learn I have a *Dowager's Hump*. A Hump!

It appears most medical lingo originates with Latin, or conditions are named after the person to discover the disorder. Sometimes the medical community chooses nicknames, such as the dermatologist calling the mark on my face a *Wisdom Spot*. Gee thanks.

Finally, it seems that Lazy and Fatty have conspired and contributed to a new discomfort, which would bear the beautiful name of the acronym *G.E.R.D*. Go ahead say it out loud.

Excuse me a moment while I take this phone call. "Hello?"

"Hello, this is Acme Medical Center calling to schedule your test."

"What is this for?"

"Your doctor wants to rule out a *goiter*."

Ah, of course she does.

I think it's time to move to Buzzard's Roost.

—Nancy Mink

Nancy has lived in Ohio all of her adult life, but is still a Michigander at heart. Her and her husband are proud parents of three daughters and nine grandchildren. She loves to read, write and travel. The 2024 Erma Bombeck Writing Competition is the first writing competition she has entered and is thrilled to be named a finalist.