



UNCC's John Oeland, in his October 3rd concert, as he professionally entertains a full house with selections from Gordon Lightfoot, Tom Rush, James Taylor, and others.

photo by richard bartholomew

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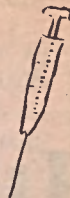
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Rx



MD

By Dr. Arnold Werner, M.D.
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Question: I have a physical characteristic that has become a psychological handicap. I'm a male with enlarged breasts, even though excessively overweight. I have become so self-conscious about it that I avoid swimming and I never wear polo shirts.

I have tried exercise, such as weight lifting, and overall weight reduction (neither one helped).

Is plastic surgery a possible solution? Would it be permanent? Would it be very expensive?

I am 28 years old.

Answer: Enlarged breasts in the normal man is not very unusual. It is actually fairly common for a degree of breast enlargement to occur in early adolescence. Men with certain body types seem to have more prominent breasts than other men. It is rare that there is a true endocrine disturbance causing such a condition.

Plastic surgery is occasionally performed in situations where the enlarged breasts are a source of concern. The result should be permanent. Since the tissue that has to be removed is just beneath the surface, the operation is not complicated, but must be done by a skilled plastic or general surgeon. You would have to check with such a person regarding the cost. Health insurance policies usually do not cover cosmetic surgery, but it may be that the surgeon would consider it medically indicated to operate and his fee would be covered by insurance.

I can't help but wonder if an objective observer would feel that your condition is very noticeable.

Question: What can I do to get rid of "growlies?" Seriously, whether I eat or don't eat I have this terrible resounding growl or gurgle that bubbles up my left side. It's so loud it can be heard across the room. It's embarrassing. Isn't there something I can do?

Answer: Borborygmus, or the rumbling noises of gases moving through the intestines is a normal phenomena heard best when a person is hungry. Its frequent loud occurrence is often a sign of air swallowing. Aerophagia occurs in many people when they are anxious. Often the person is completely unaware of the habit, but reports the noises you describe as well as belching and passing the gas by rectum.

Close observation will probably reveal that you swallow excessively and may even gulp air through your mouth. Becoming aware of the habit is often helpful in putting an end to it. There are a variety of preparations that are designed to break up the air bubbles forming in your intestines, but they are of a very questionable value. If you are especially anxious, you might consider seeking help for it.

Interestingly, the sounds are usually so diffuse, no one can tell who they come from. Maintain a look of nonchalance at all times.

Question: Is it true that a woman is 100 percent safe from pregnancy if she has intercourse during menstruation?

Answer: No. The odds are very low, but a few lucky people have even hit the jackpot during menstruation. A 100 percent safety from pregnancy means no intercourse. If you're willing to settle for 99 percent you can have it with effective contraception used all the time.

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