

Nighttime Rhymes

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One of the things they don't teach you in medical school is that most patients get sick at night. Fortunately, not everyone who gets sick actually calls. (It just seems that way when you're on at night.) Nevertheless, between the answering service screw-ups, the oddball symptoms, and the 2 A.M. emergencies for diaper rash, night call is rarely on a doctor's list of favorite things to do. So to help dull the pain of taking call, I offer the following limericks for topical relief. There are eight in all—one for each hour in what otherwise would have been a good night's sleep.

Said the mother whose babe had been teething,
"He was crying in bed, really seething.
But now he's asleep,
Not making a peep,
Should we wake him to make sure he's breathing?"

* * *

There once was a floor nurse named Doodle
Who rarely relied on her noodle.
When temperatures rose,
She'd powder her nose,
And sit on her kit and caboodle.

* * *

A dull operator named Sue
Rang my beeper at quarter past two.
It seems Mrs. Fabor
Had gone into labor,
And hadn't a clue what to do.

* * *

Said the doc to the man constipated,
"Don't you think this complaint could have waited?"
It's five after three,
So take it from me,
What you need is your head lubricated."

There was a young doctor named Dean
Who had sex with his ex-wife Colleen.
The coroner said
He dropped dead in bed
'Cause he took calls betwixt and between.

* * *

There once was a doctor named Fink
Who dreamed he turned into a shrink.
Now taking call
Was no bother at all
'Cause shrinks only lose half a wink.

* * *

There once was a patient named Silya
Who asked, "Can insomnia kill ya?"
"That depends," said her doc
As he glanced at his clock,
"On whether you pay when I bill ya."

* * *

When I chose to become a physician
I was following family tradition.
But had I a peep
Of how little I'd sleep,
I might have become a musician.