

A Sniff of Anesthetic...

A few years back, we upgraded our bedroom furniture. The old, mismatched stuff that we blended together after our wedding just wasn't holding up (insert newlywed joke here). Most of my wife's focus was on looks and style, as that is generally her department. I have little of either. My concern was a bedside table that would hold all my stuff.

Right now, there are approximately forty-two journals, books, and magazines on the table next to my bed. Some have been partially read, some are earmarked to read in depth, and others are crisp and unopened. I can learn about dentistry, retirement planning, college football, hobby farming, Texas politics, religion, history, and fatherhood, all without rolling over. That's not even counting my newfound phone application that allows me to download any book, anytime, anywhere. Alas, there's a reason I never get caught up...

But I do learn.

Nowadays, everything gets researched. I'm not sure who pays, but there is a constant flow of scientists studying just about anything you can think up. For instance...there was recently an article in the journal *Molecular Pharmaceutics* where researchers sprayed different types of anesthetic up the noses of rats. I can only imagine the conversation...

"Doctor, what is our overfunded government project for the next two months?"

"Well, I've been thinking we'll spray something up rat's noses. Any suggestions?"

"You know, I was just at the dentist and..."

All kidding aside, this research found a potential solution to one of everyone's biggest dental fears, the dreaded s-h-o-t. It seems that when sprayed up these rat's noses, common dental anesthetics collected in the rat's teeth, jaws, and mouths. In other words, there is potential (at least in rats) to numb teeth for dental work without a shot. While lab rat dentistry is yet to be a recognized profession, this could someday translate to people as well. Imagine a sniff of anesthetic and no needles. That would make dentistry better for us all.

Alas, I imagine this research has a long way to go. There's a big step from the lab to a real world dental office. Still, we can all dream.

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