

What Kind of Older Hospitalized Patient Do You Want to Be?

Fellow health care professionals, let's face it: We're all going to grow old and die. We're all going to be hospitalized at some point, assuming [burnout](#) doesn't claim our lives first or we wisely opt for [hospice](#) instead. We take care of lots of older patients, but have you ever thought about what kind of older hospitalized patient *you* want to be? Not sure? Here at [GomerBlog](#), we've compiled some of our favorite types.

Fat Jolly Santa (FJS)

Fat Jolly Santa is an older, obese male with a grey or white beard. He's a happy-go-lucky guy; the jolliest of jolly fellows. He's always ticklish when you examine him and, man, does he laugh! It's a hearty laugh or cute little giggle that makes YOU laugh too. And he always seems to grab his belly when he laughs! It's not quite the "Ho-ho-ho!" of [Santa](#), but it's pretty darn close. You won't admit it, but you kind of want to see what he looks like wearing red. You can't help but smile when you leave FJS' room. He is usually constipated.

Little Ole Lady with the Broken Something or Other (LOLFx)

She's tiny, she's sweet, and the poor ole thing broke her _____ when she accidentally fell while _____. She reminds of you Grandma. She never complains and never wants to be a bother. All she wants is some [coffee](#) for breakfast, maybe some grits. Without fail, you remind her of her grandson or granddaughter. Though she's relatively sharp, be on guard: she will [sundown](#). She is usually very [constipated](#).

That Patient Named Willie with the UTI (WUTI)

Doesn't matter if you're a female named Willie Mae or a male named Willie Ray; if Willie is in your name, you will be hospitalized for recurrent UTIs complicated by sepsis, altered mental status, and acute kidney injury. If your last name is Johnson, you will suffer the same outcome. If your name is Willie Johnson, consider total genitourinectomy. Willies are constipated. They are also multidrug resistant and require [contact precautions](#).

The Chatterbox (CHAT)

Chatterboxes are so nice but they will talk and talk and talk. They often say “if you know what I mean” and more often than not you will not know what they mean. But they keep talking anyway. It’s close to being manic, but not quite. It often takes an act of God to try to escape the room as they are generally immune to social cues (including your phone or pager going off). Silence is a sign of infection. They always have diarrhea. Check a *C. difficile* toxin.

Little Old Pleasantly Demented (LOPD)

The little old pleasantly demented are similar to LOLFx except they have underlying dementia. The LOPDs say nonsensical sweet things that usually make you go, “Awww...” They might say something like “I sure love biscuits” when you ask about chest pain. They smile from ear to ear and love to give hugs. They don’t want too much sunlight in the room. They want the door to stay open. They want just one more [blanket](#) to stay warm. Family will confirm that the last bowel movement was last week. Degree of constipation and size of smile are inversely proportional.

The Curmudgeon (GRRR)

He’s grumpy. He’s ill-tempered, bitter, and mean. He glares at you with red eyes that scream, “I hate you, [you little incompetent twerp](#).” He doesn’t care who you are: doctor, nurse, social worker, or family member. Even when he’s happy, he’s angry, often complaining about his happiness. He may tell stories of “back in the day...” He’s high risk to yank out any Foley that gets placed; when he does, it’s typically a [bloodbath](#). He gets frustrated by telemetry, medications, people, warmth, kindness, and caring. He refuses lots of things, including a bowel regimen.

Do you think you’ll be one of these guys? Or maybe it’s someone else? Please share what kind of older hospitalized patient you would like to be!