

I Wish My Pager Had Less Irritating Sounds, Like Fork on Chalkboard & Midnight Car Alarm

In medical school, I found this ugly, indurated, black mass along my right lower quadrant, towards my inguinal crease. It wasn't tender per se, but it was extremely irritating, a nagging pain. Like anyone would, I played with it and picked at it. I showed it to my friends and family. I asked them to touch it and it made them uncomfortable. They all told me the same thing: "It looks funny," "It's probably benign," and "Stop pointing it at me, that's rude." Sadly, everyone was wrong. This thing is malignant and causes me much pain and suffering.



"Let's try that again, this take is for a doctor's pager."

This mass is my pager.

When it's turned on and going off left and right, my day turns into a game of how many things can I multitask before something terrible happens. I do not enjoy this game. When it's turned on and not going off, I can't rest because I assume the darned thing is broken, asking the operator to send me test pages only to find that it is in fact working just not busy.

When it's turned off, I still can't relax; I develop vibratory paresthesias along my upper right thigh, even though my pager is nowhere to be found and perhaps buried somewhere in the park. I believe this condition is called Phantom Pager. My primary care physician wants to start me on gabapentin or amitriptyline.

Though I haven't tested itself, I bet the pager still works even if it doesn't have a battery. I swear it is [powered by evil](#).

These are the alerts on my pager: Standard Alert, which is the perfect balance of loud, jarring, and irritating; eight Pleasing Alerts, which is a lie as they are simply eight varied and slightly more annoying alerts than the Standard Alert; and a Chirp Alert, which is what I imagine a [hospital administrator](#) would sound like if it were transformed into a metallic parrot. There is also a Silent Alert, which is actually just vibration mode. When a Silent Alert takes place and my pager is resting on a hard surface like a desktop, I often have to change my underwear and pants, as the earthquake-level sound and shaking literally scares the crap out of me.

I'm glad to know that cutting-edge medicine is supported by the strong medical infrastructure akin to an Atari 2600.

I want my pager to have less irritating sounds. As it stands, my Pavlovian response is to hurl my pager off the roof of my building, hoping it smashes into thousands of useless bits and pieces, only to be run over by an array of marching bands and military tanks. Yet somehow I bet it would still make a sound. I'd like to hear anything, literally anything else than the same painful alerts that have been haunting me for nearly a decade. I'd take any of the following: Nuclear Explosion, Power Saw on Bone, Power Saw on Metal, Fork on Chalkboard, Incessant Midnight Car Alarm, Screaming Baby on Plane, Angry Psychotic, Gilbert Gottfried on Repeat, or Abnormally-Loud Leaf Blower.

General surgery told me that the mass was inoperable. Radiation oncology told me that the mass was not responsive to radiation therapy. Medical oncology wanted a bone marrow biopsy while infectious diseases wanted repeat blood cultures. I guess I'm left with only one option until they find a cure: I'm forwarding my pager to my cell phone.