Materia Medica

Fluoroscopy

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When my son went for his upper GI with small bowel follow-through for what turned out nothing serious, he described a radiologist with big ears—a colleague of mine with short hair. Radiology is like that—silhouettes and filling defects. At his age and also with my parents’ blessing I went for a barium study not knowing what exactly was entailed.

Turned out my illness didn’t have an image and therefore couldn’t kill me which was good enough for me. My son is a little upset that after all that—for which I had to pull strings and pay mostly out of pocket—they didn’t find anything. Normal is often suspect, and in the glass half full mode of hollow reassurance I point out how nice it should feel to excrete chalk till you’re pink again, like everyone else, on the inside.

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