

FUNNY SITUATIONS REPATS HAVE FACED



I still can't get comfortable with the walk of shame carrying a filled urine test container in your hand and standing in line holding it with other urine test fellows till they let you in.

Not understanding the 'are you married?' question and repeatedly answering no... despite the winks and animated faces of nurses trying to make me understand what it actually meant. Still not married, but have a baby. I wish they would just ask if a virgin instead.

I was going to do a few exams and I was told to just take your clothes off; no gown was offered and the dr + nurses were right there. This is especially strange when going to the gynecologist. It happened to me in Sirmed and other private hospitals/clinics.

I found myself a great dentist; such a fun, young and extremely professional doctor. I was amazed by his proficiency, and every time pain would be involved, he gently apologizes. Going to him is like going to a club; he opens Youtube and either puts techno, chill music, or hip-hop to calm you down. Proud we have doctors like him in Armenia. The best was when I asked him something and he opened Youtube to show me the procedure, explaining things one by one!

A few months ago I called a number for a urologist at Izmirlyan center. Shock #1: The doctor answered the phone. Shock #2: He said no appointment was needed and to just come to Izmirlyan. I took a taxi, went there for a possible UTI. I was seen by that doctor after a half hour wait. He sent me to give a urine exam, then they did a bladder ultrasound, also. So, shock #3 was that by the end of the day I had all of the results. This would've taken me probably one month in L.A., making an appointment with a urologist, then ordering the test, ultrasound, and then another appointment to get the results. Unless you go to an ER, which is a different story.

Realized a lot of men here don't shake hands with women in the workplace. It reminded me of Muslims in my country. I never imagined Armenian would ever act like this towards women. I have since learned it's a respect thing, but it's not something we are used to.

Fell over and fractured my thumb. Hospital x rayed and treated me very well, but I also had to file a police report. Thought that was pretty weird. Apparently that's the norm with such cases?

When I was in the hospital recovering from surgery, I got a beautiful gift basket from my colleagues; the nurses and staff got all excited and were extremely impressed. Apparently, they had seen plenty of flowers but never a basket of goodies, and they all initially thought that 'ի՛նչ հարս է՛նի պահում.' It's been 16 years and only recently did I learn that baskets are considered a marriage proposal only and serve no other possible purpose

The most shocking and positive thing is that everyone has a 'tsanot' who's a specialist in something or another who can lead you to whichever specialist you need. My overall experiences with healthcare in Armenia far outweigh those in the UK, which, while generally free, take months. But yeah, if you ever need a specialist, ask a local - they'll know someone.