

# The

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## An Unforgettable Gift

By Dennis Glubish, MD, CCFP, FCFP

Children have been a major part of my family practice over the past 26 years.

During a particularly bad flu outbreak, a little four-year-old boy named Matthew was brought to my office with the typical symptoms of a nasty upper respiratory infection. Matthew's mother had always brought him in for regular development check-ups and minor childhood illnesses, so he was quite familiar with our office and myself. A rather shy boy, he rarely talked, but cooperated whenever he was examined.

It is my custom to always speak to the children at their level, explaining the examination and ultimately the treatment. On this occasion after the usual ear, throat and chest examination I knelt down to Matthew with his thick greenish nasal discharge dripping down to his lips, and explained that he had some germs in his nose and throat and that I will give him some medicine that will help him breathe easier and cough less.

Matthew looked pleased as he turned to his mother and whispered something in her ear.

Curiously, I asked his mother what Matthew had said. His mother replied that Matthew was happy that I could help him and would like to give me a kiss.

Somewhat taken by surprise, I thought, "Why not?" so I bent over and presented my cheek to Matthew's snotty lips.

Matthew turned again to his mother and whispered in his mother's ear.

Again I asked, "What did he say?"

Matthew's mother replied that Matthew wanted the kiss to be "On the lips."

Imagine how quickly I washed with copious amounts of water once the reward was received.

*Dr. Glubish is a family physician in St. Albert, Alberta.*