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# The Best Medicine

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## A Slight Mispronunciation

After I graduated from medical school, I decided to learn medical terms in Cantonese so that I could better communicate with my Chinese-speaking patients.

One day, a Chinese patient presented with acne vulgaris on her face (pronounced “um chong” in Cantonese). I did a history and physical examination and made the correct diagnosis. However, I repeatedly said “gee chong,” thinking this was the word for acne in Cantonese.

My Cantonese-speaking secretary later told me that while this patient appreciated my diagnosis and treatment, she couldn’t understand why I kept telling her she had a hemorrhoid!

I checked my list of translated Chinese medical terms and, while I was only off by one syllable, I was at the wrong *end* of the diagnosis! **Dx**



*“Your pacemaker should work just fine, but we like to have a backup if it doesn’t start up on cold mornings.”*

This item was sent in by  
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*Have you ever been in a funny medical-related situation that you’d like to share with your peers? Send us your 150- to 200-word contribution so we can share your laughs. Published authors will receive a specialty mug from The Canadian Journal of Diagnosis.*