

Too embarrassed to ask your doctor? Dr Ozzy is your answer. After using and abusing his body for decades, he wants you to learn from his mistakes

Ask Dr Ozzy

+ Dear Dr Ozzy I swallowed a fly while horse riding. Do you think it's done me any harm?

Nicola, East Finchley, London

I was riding a motorcycle once with the visor up, and a bumble bee went down my throat. Not that it felt like a bumble bee, mind you — at first I thought I'd swallowed a pigeon. People think eating a bat is bad, but, believe me, inhaling a bee at 70 miles an hour is far worse. Then the next day my epiglottis swelled up to about three times its normal size and I had to go and get an injection. That wouldn't happen with a fly. The big problem with a fly is, you know that it ain't been doing anything pleasant lately. They don't eat buttercups and spend their time down the spa — they eat dog shit and bathe in their own vomit. But don't worry too much. Remember, cats eat flies all the time, and the worst thing that happens to them is the occasional fur ball. So give it a few days, and if you feel okay, I'd say that you've got the all clear.

+ What's a good cure for jet lag?

James, Toronto

They say that if you line the insides of your shoes with brown paper, it cures jet lag. Unfortunately, like a lot of things people say, it's a load of bollocks. In reality, there's only one thing that'll stop your body clock getting messed up — and it's called staying at home.

+ I keep getting horrific panic attacks. It started when my uncle died in his sleep from a random cardiac arrest. He was like a dad to me (I didn't meet my real dad until I was 13; I'm 17 now). I've been to psychologists, but they all say if I realise I'm not going to die, the panic attacks go away. That's BS, because I know I won't die, but I still feel like I'm about to explode. Please help.

Don, United States

It sounds to me like grief, Don. People don't take grief seriously enough: the loss of someone, or even something, can be very hard to get over. When I was in rehab,



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I had to attend "grief groups" for the loss of drugs and alcohol in my life. I thought it was stupid at first — especially when I met a guy in there who was sobbing about his cat going missing. But I soon discovered that grief can really mess you up. I wouldn't be at all surprised if that's what's causing your panic attacks. Your body is overloaded with emotion, basically. So I'd say get on Google and find your own grief group. It's healthier than going to your doctor and getting some Valium: that'll just fix one problem and start five others.

+ I've become addicted to swearing. It started two years ago, and now I swear in nearly every sentence, even in front of my parents and at school. I've

tried to stop but I can't. I think I must have Tourette syndrome. What's your advice?

Ben, Cheshire

Swear words are weird, aren't they? I mean, the American word "schmuck" — which pretty much nobody finds offensive — apparently comes from the Yiddish word *shmok*, which is a very, very rude term for a bloke's crown jewels. It's as bad as calling someone the C-word. Then there's the English word bollocks — which I love — which used to be slang for a vicar, or so I've been told. People just decide which words they want to get upset about, basically. So my advice to you, Ben, is to carry on swearing as much as you like: just do it in a foreign language. That way you won't get into any more trouble.

+ I live in southern California and have been prescribed legal medical marijuana (for muscle pain), but it's making me paranoid. How can I reduce this side effect — and what do you think of the claimed link between pot and schizophrenia?

Lisa, Los Angeles

When I used to smoke pot, it was happy stuff: you'd get the munchies, have a laugh and go to sleep. These days when you have a joint, you end up holding onto your drawers and hoping you don't go insane. It's because they mess around with it and create all these genetically altered mutant varieties. I don't know about schizophrenia, but I do know that in the old days, the tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) content in marijuana — the chemical that gets you high, basically — used to be something like 4%. Today, I'm told it can be 20%, or even 40%. That's the trouble with marijuana — you don't know what you're getting. As for reducing your paranoia, in the 1970s you did that by having a beer. But that just made you drunk and paranoid. Which was worse.

+ My teenage son has started to spend hours alone in his room, and when I go in there I notice crusty stains on the carpet. How can I tell him to use a tissue?

Anne, Edinburgh

Ask him if he's been making any Airfix planes recently, because you're finding glue all over the place. Then tell him very nicely that you don't mind him making Airfix planes — it's normal at his age — but if he spills any more glue, he really should use a tissue because it's only polite. With any luck he'll be so embarrassed, he'll never soil your carpet ever again.

Ozzy was talking to Chris Ayres

Do you have a question for Dr Ozzy? Email him at askdrozzy@sunday-times.co.uk

Warning: Ozzy Osbourne is not a qualified medical professional. Caution is advised