At My Age

January 16, 2013 By Oriol R. Gutierrez Jr.

Today was my first doctor's visit of 2013. Flu shot, check. Draw blood, check. Get scripts, check. So far so good. Then the nurse asks, "How old are you again?" I say, "42" (said as if I was asking, not answering, a question).

She says, "I was just checking your chart and you've never had an EKG. I like to have a baseline, especially at your age." The "at your age" stung a bit, but quickly faded. She was right, of course. I am "at your age" and ever increasingly needing to monitor the effects of aging.

Some HIV meds can contribute to cardiovascular disease. The virus has been tied to an increased risk of cardiovascular disease, although the reason isn't clear. Add to those factors the risk factors that everyone faces, heart health is not to be taken lightly by those of us living with HIV.

The assistant who administered the EKG made the experience as easy as possible, including a "40-Year-Old Virgin" joke for good measure. "Him screaming 'Kelly Clarkson' was so funny," she said. I agreed.

(You see, they stick little doodads on you for a bunch of wires from the machine that have to be yanked off, and us hairy folks go "Ow!" when that happens, which brings to mind the scene from that movie when Steve Carell is getting his chest hair waxed, but, as they say, I digress.)

Thankfully, all is good with my heart, for now.

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