

Episode 42: Shit We Don't Talk About

Topic: Colonoscopies!

Speaker: Mia Voss 00:01

Hey, welcome to Episode 41 of shit we don't talk about powered by Helix Interactive. It's just me again today and our topic is wait for it, colonoscopies. Now that is shit, we don't talk about. I'll be filling you in on my recent cancer fright and the colonoscopy experience. It's not as scary as you think and I'll also be talking about that lifesaving booty call that you need to make. Tune in. It gets good. Here we go.

Voiceover: Excuse me, I'd like to ass you a few questions.

00:39

Okay, so if you're not familiar with that little soundbite, go google Ace Ventura, let me ass you a few questions and that'll tell you what the theme is about today. Folks, all about the booty all about making that booty call known as scheduling a colonoscopy. I'm here to tell you some fun tales and be a cautionary tale so you too can be safe. And look at if I end up ever uploading this to YouTube, you'll see that I look like a hot ass mess. Crying is not a good look at any age but certainly over 50. My little false eyelashes are jacked up from boo hooing this week. Fast forward it was good news but I spent the last two days under extreme alerts thinking that I had colon cancer. Not a good place to be folks highly not recommended at all. That combined with the fact that I knew that I was four years overdue for a colonoscopy. I'm also pro tip, don't do that, get it get it scheduled and I'll tell you why. Let me tell you a few stories about colonoscopies.

So, I have a history in my family of colon cancer. My great grandma Tilly died of colon cancer and then I have a lot of colon problems on my family side which mainly is diverticulosis, big difference between itis and osis by the way. We'll talk about that. We'll dive into that here. So, my first colonoscopy was in 2003 and I was 33 years old so much younger than you usually get it but because I spoke to my doctor about my family

history, even back then they did recommend that I get a colonoscopy. Not a fun recommendation. I was not hooting and hollering about that.

But with that being said, let me exhort you as I like to do on these solo podcasts to talk to your doctor and advocate for yourself. I have a great episode called medical gaslighting and I'll put a link in the show notes. You are your best advocate. So, having that conversation and if you do have history of colon problems, most certainly if you're under, they are saying that you should start at age 40. I think they're backing that up to age 45. I don't know, I'm not sure doctor, go ask him. But luckily, they did schedule it.

So, I go in and first off, so this is yes 2003. Let me just fast forward; the procedure is much easier so please don't keep the story in your head when you schedule your colonoscopy. I just want you to know how much easier it is. Because back in the day, oh my word that shit was vile, it's still vile, you just have to drink a lot less of it. So basically, the prep is you stop eating the day before in the morning. So, you make sure to pound down some good food that last night, nothing too crazy and then you will start on a clear diet that day. Now, I don't consume a lot of just sugar you know HFCS so I was a little hopped up on goofballs just because I was eating jello, drinking white grape juice. You basically cannot consume anything that has any dark or red colors most certainly. So, you end up going on a liquid diet and then that evening before this surgery or the procedure I should say, you at start drinking this wonderful gross ass solution. See how many times I'm going say ass in this show and it's vile and then you immediately start tinkling from your behind because your body's like whoa, got to go right now and it's so not satisfying. It's not in like these big poops and yes, this is poop talk folks, talking shit here. You don't get any sleep. Just be prepared for that. Take a lot of naps before you take this solution. So maybe nap during the day. I would say take two to three days off that's my again pro tip advice. So, then you're pretty much cleaned out and you're up and going all night.

So, you get to the procedure and one funny story. Oh, another couple pro tips for you. If you are going to buy the things for your cleanse and your procedure, you really want to go to the store before you are fasting. I made an awful mistake this time of going to

the grocery store the day of when I was not supposed to be eating and everything looked good. Pop tarts, fuck yes, those look amazing. Blueberry cereal hadn't eaten that in years, wanted it really badly. Meatballs, Swanson TV dinners, everything look good. So, either send someone to the store, you're going to want to get all the clear things, they'll give you the list and then they also gave me their pro tip of that. I'm going to say that a lot. That's a drinking game of taking gas **sex**(05:47) with each of the solutions the prep solution. So any who, that was one big mistake my husband at the time made was I strained out the Campbell's chunky soup to just get the broth and he comes home as happy as him with a big bowl of all the cool stuff that I had to strain out. I was like, you need to take this somewhere else. Yeah, that wasn't good.

Alright, so my first colonoscopy I get in there, everything's great. Actually, the easiest thing about a colonoscopy is the colonoscopy itself. You're asleep. You're not going to remember shit literally and you just wake up, you're like okay, all's good. So, speaking of waking up, first off, the doctor, my very first one banging ass hot. Nobody wants a hot doctor for a colonoscopy. Note to self you just like;

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Hi, you're cute. Not good. And then I wake up and again, I was married at the time. They're like so Mrs. Heron, we just had a bunch of air up there. You're going to want to pass gas. Don't feel badly about it. Now listen, I'm not a pull my finger kind of girl at all. Now my husband knows like ooh, hurry up, honey. Just blast it out and I started crying, crying from shame of like stop, go away, don't make me do it. Eventually I did but I was not happy about it. They did find some polyps at the time and I don't believe they're pre-cancerous but they did snip snip. Everything was great, didn't feel badly, got these great photos of the procedure which I then went and put on my fridge because I was so proud of the shiny clean pictures of my colon and people come over and be like, what's that? I'm like, my clean colon. Don't you like it? Because that's the kind of weirdo I am.

Alright, fast forward. I got my next one in 2007. Also, not from with the prep but then I'm thinking, Okay, great. I know what I'm doing. I'm going to wake up, I'm going to go to culvers, that was my meal of choice post colonoscopy. Well, I wake up and they're like oh, bad news. We had to stop, you told us to stop. So apparently, you're awake but you just don't remember it and that was when they discovered that I had diverticulitis which are these like weird little pockets in your colon and mine happen to be at this little corner like sigmoid some shit like that. So, they are like listen, not only can you not eat but you are going to need to go get a barium enema, God helped me and x rays.

So listen, then I have to go rolling over there still hungry, angry, hungry, hungry, angry and barium enemas so incredibly not awesome. So then there's a group of people in there and you're awake, and you got this little gown and you're trying to keep your booty covered all your business, the taint everything is out and then they want you to keep rolling over so they can take different pictures. So, you have a tube up your ass trying to keep it in rolling around on the table. They're taking pictures, they're chatting. I was like hey, focus on this because you need to hurry up. So that was able to at least see that I didn't have any polyps in the part of the colon where they could not get the camera but that's when I found out I have this diverticulosis also affectionately known as hot pocket because that's what it feels like when it flares up.

Now, I've been really lucky. I have not had a lot of problems with this diverticulosis. Again, big difference between itis and osis. Diverticulosis is the condition, diverticulitis is the flare up and it will hmm. With you want to get into the emergency room quicker, don't say you have a heart attack, say you have diverticulitis.

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They'll take you in quick. That's a pro tip I learned from my brother. I don't know if it actually happens but it makes sense because if your colon has a little burst problem bye. Again, I'm not a doctor. I mean play one on TV or at Holiday Inn so look it up yourself, google's your friend.

Alright, so get that done. I go for the last 14 years. Now listen, I was supposed to go in four years ago. This is where the shame spiral comes in because I knew fuck, I should have gone in. I should have gone in now, one or two of the years like the year 11 and 12 like at one point, I didn't have insurance. Things were down in my business so didn't have as much money but cost more. I also didn't do the homework to advocate for myself. Once I got insurance again to make it, I found every butt fuck excuse, see what I did there, to not have a colonoscopy.

Alright, so finally, I make it happen. I was going to do it before I went to New York and I'm like no, I don't know if it's going to bother me. I don't really have any problem. I'm going to talk about the stats from this company called fightcolorectalcancer.org has some really fun little graphics. I learned about them from my friend Tim McDonald, go look him up. He's amazing. He's also going through colon cancer right now so he will talk about it as long as the day is about his experience. But that is one of the things is that they say, colonoscopy miss, I don't need to have a colonoscopy until I have cancer symptoms and that most pre cancers are found in people who don't have pain or symptoms. Symptoms can mean the cancer is more advanced and harder to treat. Son of a bitch, right?

So, fast forward to Tuesday I go in, I finally make it happen. Let me just tell you about the prep. It's really not that bad. Here's another myth; that prep stuff is too gross to drink. Well, guess what? It's not great but you drink. The first round is 16 ounces. I have these fun little metal straws with a little bend on them. I'll put it in the link where to get it on Amazon and I just put that towards the back of my throat and I just shove the lug chug, chug, chug and you just don't go anywhere. Don't go anywhere because it'll hit you fairly quickly. But it used to be gallons and now it's just 16 ounces. One the night before and then one in the middle of the night. So really only 32 ounces totes, you can do it. You can do it. You really can. Bow prep can be mixed into your favorite sports drink, clear soda or juice so it tastes better. I didn't do that but yes, it can. Again, prep takes forever. No, it doesn't. You just can't eat that day. I decided to take naps the day when I couldn't eat just to be resting. Then I stayed up Netflix and not chilling that night.

Alright, so listen. So, I go in and I have to tell you I hope that you have the type of care that I had and this was man I'm going to forget who it was. They were so amazing though here in Colorado in Aurora, Colorado, man OSHA that's it was part of Centura Health. So, make sure that you have a health insurance plan that you can sign on and get an online and then you get messages literally through the app on your phone. So, I go to Adventist Health I think it was it was Dr. Patel and I walk in and from the minute I walk in, they were so kind and gentle and loving. I made sure by the way that it's preventative that is being billed as preventative and I got a warm blanket nor yoko and what was his name. There was another gentleman there just like how are you doing? Come sit on your blanket. We're going to talk about what's going on. The anesthesiologist comes in she tells me about what I'm going to get and explains that it's even much kinder and gentler than the anesthesia I'd had before and much cheaper but you recover quicker. Okay, so then Dr. Patel comes in we go through my records, I go in. Now, I will say because I have diverticulosis there is a little bit more risk of ooh, like tear puncture. Whoo, you know, I was like please don't say that zzz cancel but they explained the risk to me and then I went nighty night. That's the best part. The colonoscopy is the best part people. So, I wake up and everything's fine. He says we found three polyps and they are concerning. So, I'm glad you're in here so I got to tell you and then he also said my diverticulosis is worse so I have a lot hotter pockets. I have not been taking as good care of myself as I should. I felt the shame and regrets so hardcore the last two days.

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So you know, I'm just saying this so you don't have to feel it either. Go get it as soon as you need it. But I just found out this morning and they emailed and said they're not malignant and that he said it's a good thing you came in because they were pre-cancerous. Huh, I feel like I stepped back onto the curve as a big bus ran right by. I was so mad at myself of like if you have ass cancer God damnit, not that it's worse than any but I don't know, it just was in my head. Not saying I'm right.

So, yes, so that is my good ending to the story. And, you know, I also, when I was pulling into the parking lot, Charlie dropped me off. I'm like if I see a car that says ass man on the license plates, ass man, like in Seinfeld seriously, I can't even so that's what I wanted to talk about today. Let me stop real quick for a commercial break for a group of people that I absolutely love, hang tight. I'll be right back.

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Okay, I'm back. Let me say a few more things about my podcast team. Drew Linsalata, who was the very first guest here on this podcast has his own podcast and it's called the anxious truth. He's also written three books on the topic, the newest of which is called "7% slower. A simple trick for moving past anxiety and stress." I have to say I feel very seen with this book especially the stress part. Go check it out. I will put links in the show notes and the other guy is Joe Ryan. His podcast is called "it's not you. It's your trauma. A trauma, PTSD, abuse, anxiety and recovery" podcast. Again, I'll put the show notes in there but you can also just go to joeryan.com and check it out. I dig these guys.

Alright, as I wrap up here, obviously, a lot of my experiences that I shared are starting from 10 or 15 years ago and thank tiny Jesus in a handcart that the medical industry has made it a little bit easier for colonoscopies but see what I did there? I did look it up with the cancer, you know what's it called? [Cancer.org](https://www.cancer.org) is the website so that is American Cancer Society and here are the age 40 to 49 screening recommendations. Breast cancer screening recommended beginning at age 45 with the option to begin at 40, get it done. Cervical Cancer Screening recommended for people with the cervix. That's me. That actually starts at 25. Colorectal screening recommended for everyone beginning at age 45.

So, listen, it's an option if you're over 45 and also at age 45, African Americans should discuss prostate cancer screening with a doctor. So as far as even with the colorectal, definitely talk to your doctor about it. Find a good doctor who's going to listen to you, advocate for yourself because you don't have to necessarily get a colonoscopy. There are tests that you can get. It's like poop on a stick which is pretty exciting. I wish I would have had that option actually but there are definitely other options besides that. There's Cologuard which is a test for age 45 and above. Now, I believe you will have to have that done every year.

But again, I'm not a doctor. I don't play one on TV but I just wanted to have this conversation because we're not talking about it. I know it. I know a lot of people aren't, they whisper about it. Listen, nobody wants to talk about their ass unless they're being one. And again, closed mouth, don't get colonoscopies. So make sure you make the booty call if you have a family history, if you're over 45 or find out about Cologuard. There's a lot of different options. I just want you guys around longer you know all you all. So advocate for yourself, find out what tests that you need. I actually got skin test this year, I got biopsies, I have my cervix checked, all kinds of things, lots of fluff and buffing. So, if you have any questions, talk to your doctor because I'm not one like I said. So, it's good to see everybody or to have you be here with me today on another solo podcast. I will see you on the next episode. Bye

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