



*Delete, delete,
delete.*

*Delete, delete,
delete.*

Please remove me— please?

C. Douglas Phillips, MD, FACR

I use e-mail. I'll bet you do, too. A friend recently told me that he heard of a poll of younger kids who were asked to describe old styles of communication. He thought of smoke signals, telegraph, etc. I would have thought the same. The kids answered e-mail and text messages. How fast must technology advance? Good God, I can distinctly remember how wonderful I thought my first e-mails were. No stamp or anything. Replies within a few hours. I digress.

When I open my antiquated e-mail system these days (I expect you suffer through the same), I am overwhelmed by nonsense and useless BS.

Delete, delete, delete.

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Some are repetitive, however, and that often leads me to the decision to peruse the mail to look for one hopeful sign — yep, you guessed it, **UNSUBSCRIBE**. I think that I can follow that link, confirm my e-mail, and this will all go away. This, my friends, is called delusional thinking, and can get you locked up in many areas.

I guess that unsubscribe means different

things to different people. Companies that thought I would be interested in their 14-day CME junket to a “friendly remote sub-tropical region” to hear lectures on metabolic storage diseases will remove me from that list, but now they include me in mailings to their 13-day CME course in the ice caves of Greenland. How many offers for discount antibiotics do I need? Who sells discount antibiotics? Why would I want to pay to be a speaker at a meeting on the genome of the fire ant? Unsubscribe, remove, unsubscribe.

The instructions as you try to leave are often amusing. “Reply and include the word “remove” in the subject line.” “Do I have to put quotation marks around remove? My favorites are the ones that just can't bear the thought that you want to leave. “Are you sure? This will irrevocably remove you from our list.” Best of all is when they ask why you are asking to be removed. “Because I hate you and want you to go to prison” is never an option. I just fill it in.

Send me an e-mail if you agree. Ha! No. Don't.

Mahalo.

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