

PRISON PATHOPHOBIA

The biggest, or one of the biggest, fears of prisoners is to catch something (like a staph infection), or get bitten by one of the monster spiders that dwell in these places.

I'm not exactly phobic of disease; but here, I think a little worry is normal, given the circumstances. And this past week I got worried when I found a red spot on the back of my right leg, in the center of the muscle forming the calf, or gastrocnemius muscle to be exact. The spot was of dying flesh, and was about the size of a pencil erasure. I've never had an actual spider bite before, so I really had not personal point of reference to compare. What scared me about it was that it looked like some form of skin cancer, particularly basal cell carcinoma; and I only knew that from a photo I'd seen in one of my college text books. Now, of course, I don't really get much sun, and I know skin cancer is more commonly found on more sun-exposed areas like the face, shoulders, arms, etc.

I did kill a spider that I'd found on my pant leg, and was even suspicious of it biting me--but I wasn't sure. And the red spot did look ulcer-like. It was a bit though, as it was confirmed by my visit to Medical the next morning.

The nurses remedy? Triple antibiotic ointment and some adhesive bandages. Then after putting it on twice-a-day for three days it was pretty much gone. I didn't lose my leg, or my life, as I'd originally feared when I first spotted the mark.

I felt pretty stupid, because I couldn't even sleep the night I found it--I was up all night just waiting for the "sick call" to go report to Medical. There I was, seriously thinking I had cancer or something. Thinking, I want to see my kids again. I need to publish my books. I've gotta finish my work so the kids can have money from me at some point of their life. I'd like to pay for their college, or a house later.

And a freakin' spider bite had me thinking I'd lose my chance at any of that. I was even thinking, "NO don't go to Medical, just ignore it." But then, the thought of my leg rotting off just wasn't very appealing.