

Vitamin C

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Vitamin C

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Summary

4 times Jim used vitamin C, and 1 time Bones did

“Jim... What is this?”

Jim Kirk looked over at his roommate and friend, then holding up a vitamin C packet. “It’s vitamin C, Bones.”

“I know what it is, I more so mean why do you have it?” He rolled his eyes.

“Uh, so I don’t get sick? You’re a doctor, shouldn’t you know about that?”

“Of course I- that’s not what- Jim!” He sputtered. “You’ve got these packets stockpiled. Do you get sick often or something?”

They were moving in together for their second year at the academy. Jim had spent his first year miserable with Gary Mitchell, and Bones had spent it alone and miserable (but was unwilling to admit that that was why.). They had been able to request a double room and were granted it, much to their mutual relief.

“No, I do all I can to avoid it,” Jim replied.

Moving in with someone always teaches you new things about them, despite how much time you spent in each other’s space before. Jim’s stockpile of ration bars made sense, the kid was always on the run and he couldn’t fault him for that. But the vitamin C packets? “You’ll give yourself diarrhea with those things if you ain’t careful, if you’re supplementing electrolytes, a sports drink is honestly better, as much as you workout.”

Jim smiled, albeit a bit tightly. “I’ll keep that in mind.”

Bones muttered “oooookay,” under his breath and moved to pick up another box to unpack.

A few months later, he came home after a long shift- flu season- and wanted nothing more than a shower and a cold drink. The cold drink came first, and as he tossed out miscellaneous items from his scrubs pockets into the trash, he noticed a pile of vitamin C packets there. His eyes narrowed in suspicion. "Jim?" He called out, moving around the barrier that separated their kitchenette from the sleeping area.

Jim lay in bed, face illuminated by about 10 pads, eyes red-rimmed and glassy. "Hey, Bones," he greeted tiredly.

"Hey, kid," he moved closer. "You feelin' alright?"

"Oh, yeah," Jim said lightly, with a yawn. "Jus' tired's all."

"Mmmhm, and what's up with all the vitamin C packets in the trash?"

"Flu season. You know that."

"Suuure, and your red rimmed eyes and stuffed up nose?"

"Allergies."

"Bull."

Jim rolled said glassy, red rimmed eyes, and Bones reached for his mini tricorder in his scrubs pocket.

"No," Jim whined.

"Shush, I don't need to be catchin' anything from you or work, let me see what we're dealing with."

"We," Jim snorted. "Bones, if I'm sick, you gotta get outta here so you don't get sick too."

Bones paused, tricorder midair. "Jim, I wouldn't leave you alone with the flu, kid. Jesus. That's miserable. I'm vaccinated, anyway."

"I wasn't. Allergic."

Bones sighed, "of course you are..." and went back to his tricorder.

It was silent except for the whirl of the tricorder for a moment before, "Bones?"

"Hm?"

"...Why aren't you annoyed I'm sick?"

His eyes flew to Jim's, puppy dog wide with curiosity. "What?" He breathed.

“You like... Deal with sick people all day. Then you come home to a sick roommate. You shouldn’t have to deal with this and have every right to be annoyed.”

“Deal with *what* ? Kid, Jim,” he couldn’t help but sputter. “Deal with what? You’ve barely said two words and I was the one that asked about the vitamin C. You’re not a bother. Don’t be thinkin’ that.” The tricorder blinked its readings up at him. “You have a fever, swollen tonsils and lymph nodes, and I’m bettin’ a wicked headache.”

He waited for affirmation from Jim, and when he got it, continued. “A’right. Imma run out then and get you a fluid pack to go under your skin, some painkillers. I can’t take it away but I can help ya fight it, sound good?”

“You don’t have to-”

“I want to. Sound good?”

“Bones-”

“Does that. Sound. Good?”

He sighed, which turned into a cough, but nodded.

“Alright. I’ll be back!”

And as soon as Jim’s coughing fit ended, he was up to chug more vitamin C water.

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His throat was *on fire* .

All Jim wanted to do was get home and get something cold down his throat. It was burning like the time Frank dumped hot sauce in his mouth for mouthing off. No, worse. Definitely worse.

He slammed into the dorm and knocked back cool water from the tap.

It didn’t help.

They didn’t have milk or juice or anything other than water and liquor, so Jim dumped a vitamin C packet into his water and chugged that.

Still didn’t help.

Bones, done with classes the same time as Jim but with a further walk back, walked in at that moment. “Jesus, kid, what’s going on?” He asked as Jim frantically refilled his water.

“Throat,” Jim choked out. Or... At least tried to. It mostly came out “Th-t”.

“Jim?” Bones worriedly moved towards him, out of habit reaching for a tricorder in a pocket he wasn’t wearing. “Jim, talk to me,”

Jim tried, he really did, but he couldn’t get the words out.

Bones cursed. “Okay, tell me the last thing you ate? Drank?”

Jim shook his head, shrugged, boy, was it getting hot?

“This vitamin C, before or after?”

“Af-”

“Okay, okay, so you came back, throat hurt, you drink-”

“Brns,” Jim whispered.

“Your throat was burning before you couldn’t talk anymore?”

He nodded, and wow, was it getting harder to breathe or was he just hot?

Bones cursed again, “where’s your epipen, Jim? Where?”

Jim pointed to his bag and Bones dove to the ground to dig through it.

“Incoming,” he warned before jabbing the medicine into Jim’s leg, and running for his tricorder.

Relief for Jim came slower than he’d have liked, but he supposed it was his own fault for- “Jinivier,” he said roughly. “We were studying it in a class and looking at the molecular makeup of it and I guess I touched it or got too close.”

“In what class were you studying an interrogation drug?!”

“...Interrogation.”

Okay, he couldn’t help it, he laughed at that. “And...” Then a sick feeling washed over him. “How do you know you’re allergic to that?”

The light mood he had built suddenly deflated. He could always tell the second he lost the rapport with a patient, and it killed him every time, despite what the nurses said.

Jim looked far away for a few moments. “I had a life before here, Bones.”

After Bones found out about Tarsus, and the *why* behind why Jim stockpiled ration bars and vitamin C, he cut the kid some slack on the constant chugging of vitamin C waters. He had a phobia of doctors the same way Len had a phobia of flying, and he wasn't going to be a hypocrite about phobias.

A bad cold was going around campus, and Jim was determined not to get it as he had big tests upcoming. So he holed up with his vitamin C packets and hand sanitizer. But it didn't take long for all the vitamin C to catch up with him in the bathroom.

After being in there a good 20 minutes, he came out, looking pained.

"You good?" Bones asked without looking up.

"My... Y'know what, I'm fine,"

"Jim," he said firmly. "Tell me."

That was a mistake.

Jim flinched away, "no, it's not a big deal, it's embarrassing,"

"You have a hemorrhoid, don't you?"

Jim balked. "How could you..."

Bones shrugged, "you've been downing those vitamin C packets all week. I'm surprised the diarrhea hasn't taken you out yet."

Jim shifted uncomfortably, in pain. "Okay, so what do I *do* about it?"

"Well how bad is it?"

"How should I know?! All I know is there's *blood*."

"Not in the stool though, right?"

Jim winced, "no, Bones, not in it..."

"Jim, if you don't open up about it, I'm gonna ask to *look* at it."

Jim looked aghast.

“Oh, like I care.”

“I might...”

“Jim.”

“Bones.”

“Jim...”

Jim sighed. “Alright. Alright. Ask your questions.”

“How much blood is there?”

“Like, a quarter sized amount on the toilet paper each time.”

Bones winced, “is it very painful?”

“It’s not comfortable, I’ll say that much.”

“Can you feel anything bulging when you wipe?”

“Jesus, Bones...”

“Jim, answer the goddang question.”

“Yeah...”

“Okay, I just want to rule out fissure, because an anal fissure would have you screaming on the pot. If it’s a hemorrhoid, I can prescribe some cream for it before it gets any worse. Unless you want me to look and see if we can band it.”

“Cream is fine, thank you.” Jim chirped.

Bones stood up and went for his prescription padd. “I’m proud of you, Jim. For tellin’ me the truth.” He said it away from him, purposely, so Jim wouldn’t have to look him in the eye. The kid didn’t do the best with genuine praise, and he could feel him near-bristle at it.

“Sure, Bones. Thanks for the help.”

“Now I’m gonna ask about your bowel movements,” he turned around.

“Jesus...”

Jim sat down across from him with three oranges on his tray. "Jim... What's up with the citrus?"

"Trying to ward off scurvy, being on a ship and all."

"You a pirate?"

"I'd make a good one."

"Jim, this is a 3-day training cruise for medical students. You didn't even need to come--"

"You needed a medically complex patient!"

"Which I could have made up with AI! You just wanted to go on a joyride."

Jim shrugged, "can't a guy emotionally support his buddy through a hard time?"

Bones softened, "is that why you really came?"

Jim shrugged again, sheepish that time. "Maybe I did just want a joyride."

Bones scoffed at him. "But seriously, why the oranges? You aren't feeling sick, are you?"

"A little run down, I'll be fine."

"Let's go to medical after this and check you out."

"Bones, I'm fine."

"Jim, this is a ship full of medical students. You came so I could show them how to behave around patients who don't trust doctors. Maybe this is a teaching opportunity for them, if you're actually getting sick."

"I came to be a fake medical dummy, not a real one." Jim snapped.

"Okay, okay," Bones soothed. "But I'd feel better if you let me run the tricorder over ya when we're done here, okay?"

Jim grumbled but agreed.

Turned out he was fighting a virus, and Bones was able to make him comfortable in doing so. "Thanks, kid."

"For what?"

"For letting me help ya."

"Sure, Bones."

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Bones found himself sniffing again. His immune system was typically pretty solid, having been built up from being around so many sick people so often, but sometimes, what was flying around still got him. That was one of those times.

He moaned under his breath as he swiped his card to enter the dorm he shared with Jim. He was hot, cold, achey, and ultimately miserable. ‘Physician, heal thyself,’ he thought bitterly as he dropped his book bag by his shoes and shuffled inside.

Jim’s shoes were gone and the dorm was quiet, but what should have been blissful silence was just the sound of his ears ringing.

He opened the cabinet, intending to start a cup of tea, and found himself staring at Jim’s vitamin C stash. He cocked his head in thought. Taking some sure wouldn’t hurt... So that’s how he found himself on the couch with a glass of vitamin C water in front of him.

When Jim walked in, he took one look at his roommate and furrowed his brow, “are you sick?”

“Nice to see you, too...”

“Sorry,” Jim put his bag away in its proper spot, the neat freak, and walked over to him. “You just look... super pale and red eyed.”

“Any other diagnoses you wanna make, doc?”

“You’re grumpier than usual, too.”

“Hardy har har.”

“Seriously, do you need anything?” Jim asked seriously.

Bones shook his head, “nah, I’m good, kid. But thanks. Just think I’m comin’ down with what’s been flyin’ ‘round campus.”

Jim nodded, then pointed to the vitamin C water. “Good stuff,” he smirked.

Bones rolled his eyes, “shut up and drink some, too. Don’t need you catchin’ this.”

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