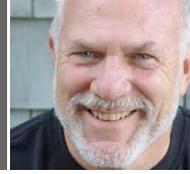


I've been **thinking**...



Thanksgiving 2009

**I've been thinking** about Shaquille O'Neal, Spud Webb, Bill Russell, and me. After all, we have so much in common.

We all played basketball in college, had knee surgery as adults, don't like the Lakers, Twitter, paying taxes, and probably will be hospitalized again before we die.

True, I'm nearly a foot and a half shorter than Shaq and a foot shorter than Russell, but I stand a half-foot taller than Spud. And, while I have yet to dunk a basketball, there was a time (before Shaq was born and while Russell was a Celtic) that I had the hops and hopes.

We all know Shaq's got the tattoos. I'm pretty sure Spud and Russell don't. Neither do I, although I am planning on getting some ink once 80 percent of America's hospitals are using bar-code scanning at the point of care (BPOC). I'm thinking a small (very small) bar code on my arm. I'll Twitter you before the ink is dry.

Speaking of Twitter, I have .00004 times the followers as Shaq but four times more followers than Spud. I'm not sure Bill Russell's heard of Twitter. The brother is 75! Perhaps he identifies with the eighty-two-year-old Joe (Nittany Lion) Paterno, who said, "The only time I ever Twittered was back in high school when I saw a pretty girl."

Jay Leno has interviewed all three NBA stars. I've watched Jay Leno. As a matter of fact, I caught his monologue the other night: "According to the AMA, the number of deaths from hospital errors is four times the number of deaths from automobile accidents. You know what that means? If you get into an automobile accident, for God sakes, don't let them take you to a hospital."

On the other hand, I wonder how many people are thankful their lives were saved in hospital ERs following automobile accidents. I'm sure the NBAers join me in being grateful for the role hospitals played in repairing our knees. I heard sage Russell (during an interview with Jay Leno) explain the difference between major surgery and minor surgery. "When it happens to someone else," he said, "it's minor."

It would be nice if I could avoid major surgery until long after our hospitals have blown through the 80-percent ceiling on scanning. In any instance, when the time comes, if you are on my medical team, I'll be happy to let you

check out my new bar-code tattoo on my arm—but only after you scan the bar-coded band on my wrist.

This Thanksgiving, I'm thankful for the one-fourth of our nation's hospitals that have blazed the BPOC trail. In the coming year, I will remain dedicated to encouraging the other three-fourths to follow in their steps. For your sake and mine.

What do you think?

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mark Neuenschwander', with a stylized, cursive script.

Mark Neuenschwander

PS. I hope you'll join me at [The unSUMMIT](#) for Bedside Barcoding in Atlanta, May 5-7

[mark@hospitalrx.com](mailto:mark@hospitalrx.com)

<http://twitter.com/hospitalrx>

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