

Sawbones 525: Seven-Second Poop Trick

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Clint: *Sawbones* is a show about medical history, and nothing the hosts say should be taken as medical advice or opinion. It's for fun. Can't you just have fun for an hour and not try to diagnose your mystery boil? We think you've earned it. Just sit back, relax and enjoy a moment of distraction from that weird growth. You're worth it.

[theme music plays]

Justin: Hello everybody, and welcome to *Sawbones*, a marital tour of misguided medicine. I'm your cohost, Justin McElroy.

Sydnee: And I'm Sydnee McElroy.

Justin: This is our first recording of the year that we've actually physically been— Isn't it? No no, we did the book club last year.

Sydnee: Yeah, we did the book club.

Justin: Or last week I mean.

Sydnee: Now we're easing back in. This is an actually episode, this isn't a book club. I mean—

Justin: Yeah, did you get any book recommendations Syd?

Sydnee: Tons!

Justin: I don't really pay any attention to our email. [wheezes]

Sydnee: Tons, thank you! I knew, I knew our listeners would have that.

Justin: Yeah, that's—

Sydnee: I know you all are readers.

Justin: Should people slow down though?

Sydnee: No.

Justin: Do we have too many?

Sydnee: No, not too many. Not too many.

Justin: Okay.

Sydnee: There are— There's also, I will say, there's a lot of overlap out there.

Justin: Mm.

Sydnee: Yeah. And a couple people have responded saying they read a book we recommended.

Justin: Which one?

Sydnee: Piranesi.

Justin: Yeah.

Sydnee: Yeah, that they enjoyed it, so.

Justin: Yeah, Amanda reached out to me about it today, she said, "I heard you talk about Piranesi." It's— But I— She couldn't think of the name, so P-I-R-A-N-E-S-I, Piranesi.

Sydnee: Yes thank you, 'cause yes—

Justin: Is the name of the book.

Sydnee: Someone specifically requested that you do that, so I actually felt that was really good that you did that.

Justin: Yeah, Piranesi is the name of the book, and it's excellent.

Sydnee: No, thank you for the book recommendations, there can never be too many, I'm not saying I can read them all immediately, but that's— I will always welcome those.

Justin: Mm-hmm.

Sydnee: I knew our listeners would come through with that.

Justin: Yeah.

Sydnee: No, but I feel like it's time to— So we need to talk about medicine again—

Justin: [chuckles]

Sydnee: — but let's ease into it. There is a—

Justin: Not capital M Medicine, we need to talk about lower case M medicine, right?

Sydnee: Lower case medicine. Popular medicine, is what this—

Justin: Pop.

Sydnee: That's a thing that's been invented.

Justin: Pop med. Pop med.

Sydnee: Pop med, popular medicine.

Justin: Pop med?

Sydnee: Which makes sense, there's popular science, right?

Justin: Yeah.

Sydnee: Except, do you know what I think is hard?

Justin: What?

Sydnee: I feel like popular—

Justin: I would argue our show is popular medicine, by the way. In the terms that you are talking about popular medicine, our show is absolutely

popular medicine, because we are talking about a layman's understanding of the topic, right?

Sydnee: Okay. But when you say that about— When I think of the concept “popular science.”

Justin: Right.

Sydnee: I think like, “Oh, this is science you’re gonna think is cool, and I’ll break it down for you because it has some application or importance or meaning in your life,” or it’s just interesting, right?

Justin: Yeah.

Sydnee: That’s popular science. I think the problem is that popular medicine, it has not necessarily been real. [chuckles]

Justin: Yeah.

Sydnee: I feel like popular medicine includes a lot of pseudoscience.

Justin: No, but I’m refusing to cede it.

Sydnee: Ah. Ah, okay.

Justin: I am claiming *Sawbones* is the world’s number one—

Sydnee: [laughs]

Justin: — pop-med podcast.

Sydnee: You have no idea.

Justin: What?

Sydnee: You have no idea what you’ve done.

Justin: I do. I’ve—

Sydnee: You have no idea.

Justin: I've found— I've done my research.

Sydnee: Oh, you've done your research.

Justin: So the number one pop med podcast on the planet, and we are not ceding the term to the phonies, and the hucksters, and the jive artists, and the con artists.

Sydnee: Mm-hmm.

Justin: And the grifters, and the shifters, and all of 'em.

Sydnee: Okay.

Justin: Alright.

Sydnee: Now you can find a lot of those, if you're lookin' for 'em.

Justin: The grifters? You're tellin' me.

Sydnee: On TikTok.

Justin: Open a window. Oh. Yeah, TikTok's it.

Sydnee: Yeah. Not for much longer.

Justin: No.

Sydnee: No.

Justin: Mm.

Sydnee: I felt like this is— it was important that we recognize a con— some of the contributions that TikTok since we may possibly be seeing it go away.

Justin: I will say this.

Sydnee: I don't know, maybe.

Justin: I will say this, I cannot speak to the whole of TikTok, nor would I, it seem—

Sydnee: Nor— No.

Justin: Nor would I, but here's what I will say. I think... in terms of [chuckles] understanding of accurate medical concepts... TikTok... dying may be a net positive. [wheezes] In terms of our global app— understanding of health.

Sydnee: I— Listen. I know what you're saying, and I— a lot of people had that same sentiment about Twitter dying, right?

Justin: There's a very different TikTok where I've seen a lot of great parenting advice on TikTok too, so I don't know.

Sydnee: That's what I'm saying. There were a lot of things I learned back when Twitter was Twitter.

Justin: Right.

Sydnee: And I missed them when it went away. I'm not saying there wasn't toxicity that I was happy to, you know—

Justin: Right.

Sydnee: — not have to engage with. But it's the same with TikTok, I learn a lot of things, and I also laugh a lot. There's a lot of funny people in TikTok.

Justin: Now we are— Now you are leaping into a full-throated—

Sydnee: Okay.

Justin: — defense of TikTok that we swore we would not—

Sydnee: No, I'm not gonna do that.

Justin: Okay.

Sydnee: I wanna talk to you about the seven-second poop trick.

Justin: Oh, I didn't— I— Huh?

Sydnee: And when I say thank you Melissa, who sent us this recommendation, I think I'm thanking you. [chuckles]

Justin: Alright.

Sydnee: So it's a thank you? [chuckles] For— No, I appreciate it, 'cause how— This is what TikTok does, it brings you the seven-second poop trick.

Justin: Did. Maybe. Who knows.

Sydnee: Did. I don't know. We'll see. And... You know... This was harder to research than you would think.

Justin: Right.

Sydnee: It's a TikTok thing, and there are also other videos on other platforms, so you would think that would be pretty easy to find.

Justin: Yeah.

Sydnee: Also, it's called the—

Justin & Sydnee: [simultaneously] – “seven-second poop trick.”

Justin: It's already engrained, yeah.

Sydnee: Like it feels like something you could Google and just very quickly.

Justin: Just get yeah.

Sydnee: Know everything about.

Justin: Google'll do.

Sydnee: This one was a little tougher. [chuckles]

Justin: Oh yeah, there's a lot of different seven-second poop tricks?
[chuckles]

Sydnee: Also it's only seven seconds, so you would think like once you did find it, it would probably only take you about seven seconds to learn about it.

Justin: A minute to learn, a lifetime to master, they say.

Sydnee: [chuckles] No, seven seconds.

Justin: A skill— Seven seconds.

Sydnee: Seven seconds. So—

Justin: The idea that you're gonna learn it in seven seconds is extremely, extremely generous. There's probably a lot of training that goes into it. You know, a high dive only takes seven seconds. It's the seven years building up to it where you practice wetness and dryness, and all the different stages.

Sydnee: Do you think that's part of the training for high diving is wetness and dryness?

Justin: Yeah, like different— The way the effects are different.

Sydnee: Uh-huh.

Justin: In different sort of environments.

Sydnee: So you know—

Justin: 'Cause when you're diving, you never know when you're gonna go from dry to wet. But that transition is essential.

Sydnee: I think they know—

Justin: Also—

Sydnee: — it's when they hit the pool. [chuckles]

Justin: Also they have to practice rolling out of the pool in cool ways, because a lot of people— The cameras cut away.

Sydnee: [chuckles] When—

Justin: But when you get out of the pool, everyone's got a signature climb out—

Sydnee: You—

Justin: — that they do.

Sydnee: You said, "rolling out of the pool," and—

Justin: They usually do that, it's more of a flop, and then [chuckles] they'll just kinda roll. Just like a—

Sydnee: I don't think they— No they don't.

Justin: Like the same way I get out of the pool every time.

Sydnee: Not they don't.

Justin: Kinda roll and yah flop.

Sydnee: They've got way more muscles than we do.

Justin: Seven-second poop trick.

Sydnee: Yes. So the— Melissa sent a video that was helpful to get me on... to start my journey.

Justin: Yeah.

Sydnee: And it's interesting because it's a video that is about the hack, and it's labeled, "The Seven-Second Poop Trick." And so then you watch this user... go through the whole video, but you don't actually get the hack.

Justin: Ohhh, you hate that.

Sydnee: Don't you hate that?

Justin: Hate that.

Sydnee: That happens a lot.

Justin: I hate that.

Sydnee: I find that very frustrating.

Justin: Mm-hmm.

Sydnee: So the story I think is part of understanding this, and this story became something I heard a lot in my research. So this very nice woman in the video explains that back in 2019, her mom had to go to the hospital, was rushed to the hospital, for severe constipation.

Justin: Mm, a fart attack.

Sydnee: Constipation. You're not necessarily farting if you're constipated.

Justin: That's true. That is true.

Sydnee: And in this case, you probably wouldn't be, 'cause it sounded like she was saying her mom was obstipated, obstipation. It just means you're so constipated, you're blocked up.

Justin: Okay.

Sydnee: You're obstructed.

Justin: It's a ob-stuckle.

Sydnee: [chuckles] Yes.

Justin: It's an obstacle to pooping.

Sydnee: Yes. So she was completely blocked up, she had gone to the— And she says she had gone to the doc a few times leading up to this. The timeline's a little weird, at first she says after three days, which we

generally don't have to go to the hospital if we haven't pooped in three days, so I'm—

Justin: I would.

Sydnee: Really?

Justin: If I—

Sydnee: You would go to the hospital?

Justin: If I didn't poop in three days, I would go to the hospital. Because something has gone terribly wrong.

Sydnee: This is a you thing.

Justin: Terribly wrong.

Sydnee: This is not a medially—

Justin: I'm absolutely at the— Day two, I'm like standing outside like, "[clicks tongue] I don't know, maybe I should squeak it in this afternoon." [wheezes]

Sydnee: This is not widely applicable.

Justin: Okay.

Sydnee: So she had gone to the doc a few times, and they had given her some things to try, like prune juice, fiber supplements, they you know prescribed her some laxatives, the usual stuff.

Justin: Classics.

Sydnee: Now in this, I will say on a side note, she says that at first the doctor told her to try fiber supplements and castor oil.

Justin: Okay.

Sydnee: And that for me was a bit of a red flag in terms of like how valid is whatever medical thing I'm about to hear. That the doctor—

Justin: Why's that?

Sydnee: — prescribed castor oil.

Justin: Okay.

Sydnee: Because we don't— I mean now, and let me say this. There are a lot of weird people in this world, and some of `em are doctors.

Justin: That's true.

Sydnee: And they very may well have gone to a doctor, and the doctor said, "Take castor oil." I believe that.

Justin: Yeah.

Sydnee: I've heard a lot of stuff out there. But that is not an evidence-based treatment for constipation.

Justin: Yes.

Sydnee: If you went to medical school in the 1800s, maybe.

Justin: Maybe.

Sydnee: But... that's not something that— I mean that— So for me when I hear that, like, "The doctor told me to take castor oil," I'm at least gonna raise an eyebrow.

Justin: Yeah.

Sydnee: I mean it's possible.

Justin: [in a high-pitched voice] Um, I mean I don't know.

Sydnee: I'm not saying it's not true. It's possible.

Justin: Okay.

Sydnee: But again, that's— we don't use castor oil standardly in the treatment of constipation.

Justin: Okay.

Sydnee: Or anything. So anyway, her mom tried all this stuff, and finally she was in such pain that she had to go the hospital. And according to the user, the patient had 20 pounds of poop surgically removed from her colon.

[weighted pause]

Sydnee: According to this story.

[weighted pause]

Justin: [exhales heavily]

Sydnee: There's lots of imagery in all the—

Justin: No.

Sydnee: I found— I watched a lot of videos.

Justin: Where? No thank you.

Sydnee: No no no. I gotta tell—

Justin: Keep it.

Sydnee: No, listen. What they do is they have like sort of diagrams of intestines.

Justin: Doo-doo-grams. [wheezes]

Sydnee: I can't, I'm not.

Justin: [laughs]

Sydnee: I will not give you a laugh for that.

Justin: Come ooon.

Sydnee: I refuse. I refuse.

Justin: Doo-doo-grams?

Sydnee: No.

Justin: Alright.

Sydnee: So they have a lot of diagrams of intestines, and—

Justin: Diarrhea-grams?

Sydnee: — they're sort of showing like, "See look, it's blocked here or whatever." But then to like evoke the thought of poop, they have like other things being pushed through tubes.

Justin: Oh yes.

Sydnee: So like a big, muddy ditch, or—

Justin: Sorry, say it five more times?

Sydnee: [chuckles]

Justin: [wheezes]

Sydnee: It's very strange!

Justin: Sorry Syd. Sorry, if you could just say it five more times.

Sydnee: There's a lot of—

Justin: What is it they use? Say again?

Sydnee: Like a big muddy ditch.

Justin: To represent the...?

Sydnee: Colon.

Justin: Okay.

Sydnee: And poop.

Justin: Just a big— Mm.

Sydnee: And sometimes it's like just a like one of those industrial, like something being compressed with a— Like you know, the kids like those ASMR videos where they just crush things.

Justin: Yeah yeah yeah.

Sydnee: With a thing.

Justin: We all know what you're talking about.

Sydnee: Okay anyway, it's weird the things that people are like, "We'll show a bunch of pictures of that."

Justin: Hydraulic press.

Sydnee: Yes.

Justin: There it is.

Sydnee: "We'll show a bunch of pictures of that while we're talking about poop, because we can't show you poop, but we'll show you this."

Justin: Mm-hmm.

Sydnee: "And you get it."

Justin: Yeah.

Sydnee: "You get it." Anyway.

Justin: And then there's *Subway Surfers*.

Sydnee: [chuckles]

Justin: Just like in a corner.

Sydnee: But then she says that this is actually a very common problem that you might be walking around with 10 to 20 pounds of poop in your colon. You know, and that she know the secret, and eventually you get to the end of the video and she's like, "Click the button at the bottom of the video."

Justin: Ahhhhh.

Sydnee: Right.

Justin: Heartbreaker.

Sydnee: Now here is what was hard for me. So first of all, I initially watched that and then was like, "Well I'm gonna go try to find out about this," and I didn't click the button because I'm not gonna do that. I never click the button.

Justin: Very smart Syd, good.

Sydnee: I don't click the button.

Justin: Don't click the button.

Sydnee: But then I couldn't— I was having trouble finding an answer.

Justin: Uh-huh. So you went back to the button.

Sydnee: And so I went back to click the button, but there wasn't a button.

Justin: What—

Sydnee: So in that video—

Justin: So there was a button before and there wasn't now?

Sydnee: No I just hadn't— I assumed it was in the comments.

Justin: Okay.

Sydnee: And so I went to the comments to look for the button, and there was no button. And so I— then I start like trying to find other videos, or other platforms of this original video, to find the button.

Justin: So is it like the button you're worried might've been lost in the editing process.

Sydnee: [chuckles]

Justin: At some point they had a button at the end of the video that you're thinking maybe got cutoff, and now this poor lost... poop trick vid is just wandering around. Is that the reality you've constructed for me, Squid? Like—

Sydnee: I don't know!

Justin: Like you've— It's just a orphaned poop trick, like we lost this— This is lost knowledge! This is gone.

Sydnee: Well.

Justin: We've lost this trick. Tell me you've reclaimed it.

Sydnee: I found myself— I was watching it on TikTok, and I think this video exists on like YouTube and Facebook Reels, and all over different platforms, right. And so like I'm watching it on TikTok, and I get— and I'm like down at the bottom of the TikTok looking, like, "There's no...."

Justin: That's how they're getting rid of TikTok.

Sydnee: "There's no button."

Justin: They're actually starting with the buttons. That's how they're banning it.

Sydnee: [sighs] We did—

Justin: They're starting buttons first, and then they're working backwards from there.

Sydnee: It may be something like that where it just starts to slowly fail. So anyway, but I'm like down at the bottom of the video like, "Where is there a button?" And then I click on the little round circle in the bottom right of the video, but that's just the sound in the video, is what that is.

Justin: Right, it's what other people who have heard the tale of the poop trick, but do not possess the knowledge themselves.

Sydnee: This is where you realize that, as much as I do enjoy TikTok, [chuckles] I only have a very surface level understanding of what is happening, other than how to swipe up and down through the videos. I've got that part. Anyway.

Justin: I don't like on TikTok when you're scrolling through your friends' videos.

Sydnee: Mm-hmm.

Justin: And they seem to have made a video that was very funny. But then really it's not them, they're just reusing someone else's funny sound.

Sydnee: Ahhhh.

Justin: I don't enjoy that.

Sydnee: You don't enjoy that?

Justin: I think everybody should make it with their own funny sounds.

Sydnee: You did famously take a sound that you didn't make and put it on TikTok.

Justin: Yes, correct.

Sydnee: And it went viral.

Justin: Yes, yes, that's correct. That is sort of a meta lever— level to the— what I was saying there.

Sydnee: Ahhh, I see.

Justin: That I did not realize until the end. [wheezes]

Sydnee: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm, mm-hmm. Okay, so as I'm looking for— I can't find the button, so I keep looking for more videos.

Justin: [chuckles] I really didn't think so much of this episode would be about you trying to find the trick.

Sydnee: And I— Yeah, I mean it was hard.

Justin: Not complaining though.

Sydnee: I'm gonna get to the— I'm gonna tell you the trick. I know this feels like I'm doing what the videos did. [chuckles] I'm gonna get to the trick. There's— And then—

Justin: Right after this!

Sydnee: I'm gonna give you bonus tricks.

Justin: Yeah.

Sydnee: There's lots of tricks.

Justin: Right after the Billing Department, let's— [wheezes]

Sydnee: But it's— it was wild because I found videos where there— First of there was the same user sort of retelling the story in different ways. Only sometimes she was the one who had the surgical poop emergency.

Justin: Okay.

Sydnee: And other times it was a family member.

Justin: So that is not that weird for TikTok, right? So TikTok doesn't wanna punish— And a lot of algorithms like this, you're not necessarily trying to create the best version of it where you think it's the best version of the ad, right?

What you're doing is a version of like what you'd see in newspaper headlines or online headlines when it was like the AB testing, where they

would put up two different versions of the headline, and the one that got the most clicks, they would generally let the other one sort of die off.

Sydnee: Mmm.

Justin: And they'd start using the one that got the more clicks, right. This is a similar thing with TikTok creators who are trying to sell stuff, where like... they'll often times create many different versions of the same one because they don't know algorithmically what's gonna—

'Cause it's not about like what's most fun to watch the whole thing, right? It's like what hooks you in those first like half a second.

Sydnee: But—

Justin: What the algorithm's gonna support, you know. I've seen a lot of people do that that seem to be like the same content just repeated over and over again, hoping that something gets picked up.

Sydnee: But it's— But what's hard is that if you are— if this is supposed to be a medical story.

Justin: Mm-hmm.

Sydnee: And you are telling it in first person.

Justin: Yeah.

Sydnee: "This happened to me."

Justin: It should be pretty much the same time [chuckles] every time you tell it.

Sydnee: Well and if you change it, then it immediately becomes apparent that it's not true.

Justin: Yeah.

Sydnee: Or at least I mean why am I— why do I believe any version of it is true if there's multiple versions of it. So then I don't know what's true.

Justin: Right.

Sydnee: And then why— Doesn't that undermine your confidence in the advice that's gonna follow?

Justin: Yeah.

Sydnee: I would think. So I also found other users telling pretty much the same story. Like very clearly other users, like—

Justin: Really?

Sydnee: Yeah, and so like a— The story, again the details get shifted around a little bit each time, but more or less somebody tries a bunch of stuff for constipation, goes to the hospital, they have 10, 20— In one case this guy was like, "There were 40 pounds of poop in my intestines."

Justin: That's a lot.

Sydnee: Yeah. And that he also— And some of them start to make other wilder claims, 'cause they're like, "It's awful, it feels awful," like which is true, like that's a very easy thing to say, like when you're really constipated, it feels bad. Sure.

Justin: I mean that's true.

Sydnee: Yeah, okay, fair. But then he's like, "Also, that constipation can cause diabetes, or dementia, or ulcerative colitis, or there's all kinds of serious conditions. Also maybe there's a parasite hiding in there."

Justin: Whoa.

Sydnee: "And you could get serious infections." Also one point—

Justin: Well why isn't the para— If I have a parasite, why do I have all this poop?

Sydnee: [chuckles] Well, there's different... That's another episode. The— But then also there are things that at one point he's like, "Also it makes you look like you weigh more than you do."

Like that gets thrown in there, and I'm like wow, they're just hittin' everything here. They're like anything that people might click on and wanna buy.

Justin: Now I will say this. I can't say... scientifically about the appearance, but I will say from a technical perspective, he is true. I mean that— those pounds of poop are in there. [wheezes] Like they're a part of you, like—

Sydnee: But they're— They're not— There is not— Okay. You do not have 40 pounds of poop in your colon.

Justin: I knew that. But I'm saying. [chuckles]

Sydnee: [chuckles] That—

Justin: If you did, it would be in you.

Sydnee: I did enjoy— I saw there was a— somebody who said they were a surgeon commenting on one of the video who was just like, "There is no possible way!"

Justin: Right.

Sydnee: Just like very angrily. I don't know if they were a surgeon or not, but it did feel to me.

Justin: Yeah.

Sydnee: That the way a surgeon would approach this, like—

Justin: We have to keep doing this.

Sydnee: — "This the dumbest thing." Like we know it's dumb. [chuckles]

Justin: We have to keep doing that though. Just keep putting true stuff out.

Sydnee: Okay. So I have— I still haven't gotten to the seven-second poop trick, and we are gonna have to take a break now.

Justin: I knew you were gonna do it.

Sydnee: And that did feel like a—

Justin: I knew you were gonna do it. I love you so much.

Sydnee: I'm taking you— I want you to experience the journey I went on, listeners. I want you to— You're coming with me on this journey.

Justin: That's good.

Sydnee: Alright.

Justin: That's good, Barnum, you got 'em. You hooked these suckers.
[wheezes]

Sydnee: I don't—

Justin: See you after the capitalism! [chuckles]

Sydnee: [chuckles]

Justin: Yah soaks!

Sydnee: [laughs] Don't say that!

[transition theme music plays]

[ad break]

Justin: Okay, welcome back.

Sydnee: Okay, sorry.

Justin: Sydnee, you are finally going to teach me this trick.

Sydnee: I know, I know I feel really bad. That was not intentional, I just... I just want— I was trying to give the— I think it's interesting that it's this hard to find.

Justin: Yeah.

Sydnee: And I will say that— Okay. Let's get into the trick, and then I'm talk about why I think there's a culture ripe for this. Here is the trick, and I found as I went through, there were a lot of different seven-second poop tricks out there. So initially, and I'm gonna walk you through what I thought each one was until I get to what I think might be the real answer.

Justin: Okay.

Sydnee: If any of 'em are real. Some were very surface level, like you click on a seven-second poop trick, and it's just selling you a supplement, right? Some were very clearly like, "Okay, this is just click bait."

Justin: Yeah.

Sydnee: Like, "Here's some fiber pills, here's a powder," whatever okay.

Justin: I have gotta say also, if it takes you seven seconds to swallow a pill, I don't know what you're doing. You need a few seconds to build up the courage, or what? [chuckles]

Sydnee: And lot of 'em are like, "Sprinkle this powder on your food before you eat it."

Justin: Again, I could do that two seconds, no problem.

Sydnee: There's a lot of—

Justin: I'm just envisioning it now.

Sydnee: [chuckles] There are a lot of very specific belly massages out there that claim to be the seven-second poop trick. Like rub your belly in this way, or you can go to someone who specializes in belly massages to get things moving inside the belly. And these are not, I should say—

Justin: Winnie the Pooh is very good for that, I've heard.

Sydnee: [chuckles]

Justin: His tummy rubs.

Sydnee: He does tummy rubs. Well and let me just say that this is separate from— There is an osteopathic manipulative therapy, OMT, which is practiced by doctors of osteopathy. There are specific— I've seen people do this, I've had colleagues who are DOs, who are trained in specific maneuvers where you do put your hands on someone's abdomen and do certain things to try to encourage constipation to be relieved.

That's not what I'm talking about, this is not me throwing shade on OMT, these are just like, "Rub your stomach this way" kind of massages, right? Like no-one is claiming any expertise in these videos.

Justin: Sure. Sure.

Sydnee: If anyone has a degree, they're not talking about it.

Justin: Yeah.

Sydnee: It's just "Rub your belly." There was another user who just said, "Oh, well the seven-second hack is just you lean over while you're on the toilet and strain really hard [chuckles] for seven seconds."

Justin: Heck yeah, du—

Sydnee: Which—

Justin: Heck yeah, dude.

Sydnee: If that was—

Justin: Just don't— Just don't push it to eight, or you'll rip in half. [wheezes]

Sydnee: [chuckles] If—

Justin: Like what do you mean?

Sydnee: If that was a trick, first of all.

Justin: [snorts] [giggles]

Sydnee: Everyone who's ever been constipated has tried that.

Justin: At least for seven seconds.

Sydnee: At least for seven seconds.

Justin: I hope you haven't quit after six seconds of you're like, "There's no hope."

Sydnee: [chuckles] But the other thing is we very specifically encourage you not to strain.

Justin: Yeah.

Sydnee: And so that would obviously not— That didn't make sense to me.

Justin: No.

Sydnee: There was another one, a user who demonstrated, while still clothed and everything, and hack where— Okay you— If you can imagine this. You sit on the toilet, okay?

Justin: Mm-hmm.

Sydnee: And then you cross one leg over another. I don't know if it matter which way, this is not specified. And then you kind of turn your body.

Justin: Mm.

Sydnee: I'll move away from the mic. Turn your body around in the direction you crossed your leg.

Justin: Okay.

Sydnee: And put your like opposite on the wall behind you. So like I'm demonstrating—

Justin: Yeah.

Sydnee: — that I've crossed my left leg over my right, I'm reaching over my right shoulder with my left hand, and I'm gonna touch—

Justin: And she's trying to keep her mouth pointed at the microphone.

Sydnee: Uh-huh.

Justin: [wheezes]

Sydnee: And I'm gonna touch the wall behind me, while... pooping. And that's going to help me. That is—

Justin: And everyone. This is gonna help the world.

Sydnee: And I guess that might take you seven seconds just to like... [chuckles]

Justin: It took you 20 to just describe it. [chuckles] I mean I would think so. What else you got?

Sydnee: Okay, there was another one who— This was somebody who I think practices acupuncture, and this one actually I found several articles that this is the seven-second poop trick, what was described in this video. I do not think this was the original seven-second poop trick. I think this is a copycat.

Justin: I'm sorry, I—

Sydnee: Seven-second poop trick.

Justin: Yeah, there's just no way that this seven seconds is seven seconds where you're getting needles shoved into you. Like that's—

Sydnee: Oh it— Well it's not acupuncture, it's acupressure.

Justin: Oh right. Okay, that makes a lot more sense.

Sydnee: So this person does practice acupuncture.

Justin: So the pressure—

Sydnee: But they—

Justin: — on the acupressure spot wherein seven seconds you could apply that pressure, I'm sure I—

Sydnee: Except that as— Now let me just say, as Justin is saying this, he's pushing on his belly as if he assumed that the acupressure spot would be somewhere in the abdomen.

Justin: I know—

Sydnee: It is not.

Justin: So I would— I know that that is actually not the way acupressure works, 'cause it's more like energy chi based, right? So it's more sort of the reflexology mapping idea.

Sydnee: Exactly. Now this one is not feet. I know a lot of people think reflexology, immediately think feet.

Justin: I just meant that there's a connection between—

Sydnee: Yeah.

Justin: — the geography and the energies.

Sydnee: Exactly. So what this trick tells you to do, and this was, like I said, I found several like popular med articles out there that where like wellness bloggers and people wrote, where they're like, "This is the seven-second poop trick." This is not the original. I think that that must've started trending, "seven-second poop trick," and other people just—

Justin: Ohhhh right, okay.

Sydnee: — started, you know, taggin' onto it. Anyway, in this trick, so you take your hands, make 'em into two fists.

Justin: Okay.

Sydnee: Okay. And you're gonna put 'em like thumbs towards each other.

Justin: Okay.

Sydnee: Put 'em together.

Justin: 'Kay.

Sydnee: And rub 'em for seven seconds. That's it. And that's gonna make you poop.

Justin: Okay, gotta—

Sydnee: [chuckles]

Justin: Okay, I gotta go. Syd, finish on your own!

Sydnee: [chuckles] That one, it was interesting because they like for one of the articles, they interviewed like a GI doc to say like, "What do you think?" And it's— I mean I ca— I— like I can't even imagine having to be like, "I have no— Why? I don't—" I mean like, is this harmful? No. I don't know, that's— you can do that, and it's seven seconds out of your day, I guess you may— If, you know.

But... Anyway, and then there was another one that I enjoyed where the person doing the video has like a model basically, they have another person to demonstrate this on, and they have someone laying down on their back, stomach exposed, like abdomen exposed. And he says, "Draw like—" Not literally draw, but you know, make a diagonal line between the navel and your right hip.

So like if you imagine there a line from like there to there, the middle of it. Put your fingers there and massage for seven seconds. And what he says you're doing is that that is the ileocecal valve, that it's connecting your small, large intestine, and it's blocked. And so by massaging it, you're opening it.

Justin: [from a distance] Ooo!

Sydnee: And he says, “And if it doesn’t work the first time, don’t worry, just keep doing it about twice a day every day until you poop.” Which I love it ‘cause it’s—

Justin: It’s the hiccups thing, right? Of like— Yeah.

Sydnee: Probably you will.

Justin: Eventually, you’ll probably poop.

Sydnee: I mean most of the time, constipation relieves itself. I mean yes, occasionally people do need to go seek medical attention, but most of the time you’re constipated and then it alleviates. So probably you could do this twice a day for a couple days and then you would poop. It would almost certainly have nothing to do with this, but there you go.

Justin: Yeah, what if the seven seconds were right before that happened, that’s your seven-second trick.

Sydnee: What I finally found was on another GI health sort of blog website where they collect sort of different health topics and blogs and articles, and then people write about them.

And I finally found there what I think was the original description of the video. I think what happened is the original video was an ad that got like— I assume eventually the ads just don’t run anymore, right? Like you pay for them.

Justin: Yeah, yeah.

Sydnee: So I think the video that I couldn’t find the button for was an ad.

Justin: Oh okay.

Sydnee: And the— it was gone. And so I can’t find the ad.

Justin: Ah.

Sydnee: Which maybe tells us all we need to know, it’s an ad. [chuckles]

Justin: Yeah.

Sydnee: But here's the step-by-step guide to the original, I think, seven-second poop trick. I don't wanna make a— I am not like a great internet— In terms of the history of the internet and chasing down videos, I'm good at medical research.

When it comes to this area of research, I know there are people out there who are really great at it, right? Like tracking down where did those weird internet ideas, memes, trends, what— where did it come from? Not necessarily my area of expertise, but I'm pretty sure this is the original seven-second poop trick.

Justin: I'm ready.

Sydnee: So Dr. Sam came up with this, who is a GI doc, according to the literature around it. I don't know any of this to be true or false, I'm just reporting to you what is written. So first, you're gonna drink a full glass of room temperature water upon waking in the morning.

Justin: Okay.

Sydnee: Okay? You can, it is noted later, you can add some apple cider vinegar to this, and there's an entire argument for why this might be helpful to you. But the important thing is drinking the room temperature water.

Justin: Okay.

Sydnee: Second, while you're still in bed, you're gonna do some stretches to increase blood flow, reduce muscle stiffness, and support your digestive system.

Justin: Okay.

Sydnee: So stretch.

Justin: That's—

Sydnee: Drink water, stretch.

Justin: Right.

Sydnee: Number three, there's a specific yoga pose which is usually referred to as the "wind relieving pose," that you know makes sense if you—

Justin: I'm looking at a picture of it. It's kinda like you lie on your back with your... knees brought into your chest.

Sydnee: Yes.

Justin: Kinda like when Austin Powers pretends to be a nut inside the nut.

Sydnee: There you go. Yeah, like that. You're— What you're trying to do is compress your colon and release gases.

Justin: Squeeze it out.

Sydnee: And squeeze it out.

Justin: What do you do next?

Sydnee: And squeeze it out. Yeah. And then do some breathwork, basically. Do some diaphragmatic breathing, there's a— some specific techniques that are recommended to do, but it's basically relaxing your body, increasing oxygenation, doing a— doing some breathing work.

Justin: Okay. I mean I— That— If you did that every day... Poop or not, I think you'd be living a happier life. I bet you'd be a little bit happier. If we all started out days this way, I think we'd all be killin' it.

Sydnee: I thought this was very— It was disappointing to me how mundane the seven-second poop trick turned out to be, because I agree with you, there's nothing— I mean I— We could talk about apple cider vinegar for a whole episode, 'cause we did.

Justin: 'Cause we did an entire episode already. [laughs]

Sydnee: We did an entire episode, and I— You know, we said it in the episode before, and I would say it again, there really is no evidence that

taking a teaspoons or tablespoon or whatever you're drinking in the morning of apple cider vinegar is having some sort of impact on your health.

Positively or negatively really, I can't— I don't have evidence to claim either. So if you like the taste of it... Okay. But the water is important, it's important to drink water, to stay hydrated. Stretching is good.

Justin: Great.

Sydnee: You know, doing things like yoga, the— that are— that stretch and strengthen your body, that get you moving, that make you feel more relaxed and centered, these are all positive things. There's nothing wrong with any of that advice. Breathing work, I mean these are all— I would say that that probably all takes more than seven seconds.

Justin: Yeah.

Sydnee: I mean you're really chuggin' that water.

Justin: Yeah.

Sydnee: If you're drinking an entire glass of water, and all this in seven seconds?

Justin: Maybe you could do each of these things in seven seconds? It's like several seven seconds, you know?

Sydnee: Yeah.

Justin: Seven seconds of water drinking, seven seconds of stretches, seven seconds of Austin Power yoga, seven seconds of deep breathing, you know what I mean? And then you just like sit on the toilet.

Sydnee: It's really interesting 'cause if it was an ad, there had to have been something to sell.

Justin: They're selling, right.

Sydnee: Now, I don't know what that original product was, I can imagine that there are— I don't know, but I can imagine that it could be some sort of gut health supplement, there's lots of those out there right.

Justin: Yeah.

Sydnee: Things that people sell that tell you to—

Justin: Yeah.

Sydnee: — that they support gut health.

Justin: Yeah.

Sydnee: It could be a book or some sort of video series, something that's like teaching you techniques possibly.

Justin: Yeah.

Sydnee: I don't know, I don't know.

Justin: So if you're operating completely in the theoretical here. It could be a one-act play, I mean we don't know Syd.

Sydnee: Well, probably not. But—

Justin: It could be a cereal.

Sydnee: Well, but it's— it's interesting because when I hear "seven-second poop trick," I think "Well, oh this is not—" Well, no, I don't— [chuckles] Yes, it's funny, but I also think like, "Well that's not real." Like immediately just the title of it makes me think that you're just gonna try to get me to buy something.

Justin: But the first time that you heard there's a special stool that you put your feet on to poop better, you probably thought that was pretty silly too.

Sydnee: That's true too, and there are advantages to different positioning while you're going to the bathroom, as you reference, the Squatty Potty. A stool that you put your feet on to kinda bring your knees

up higher as you poop can be beneficial if you're— to help keep you from straining, 'cause like we said, we don't want you to.

Why is this out there? We've done an episode on constipation before, but I will say that everything they're drawing on in this videos is old stuff. We have been obsessed with pooping as long as we've been pooping, as a species. And so always.

Justin: Yes.

Sydnee: I think that it feels bad to be constipated, and so we seek solutions for it, that's normal. The idea that if you don't go to the bathroom regularly that the stuff building up inside you is creating some sort of like toxic milieu that will make you sick.

That's a really old idea, and has been blamed on all— I mean like all kinds of different illnesses have been blamed on constipation through the years. We've done a whole episode on Kellogg who, among many—

Justin: Many.

Sydnee: — terrible, terrible acts and deeds, was also obsessed with constipation and obsessed with the dangers to your health of not pooping, and prescribed all kinds of things to alleviate it.

We know that there are real medical conditions that can cause you to be severely constipated or obstipated, and it does need to be addressed. And as always, if you are somebody who is regularly fighting this problem, please go talk to your provider.

Justin: Yeah.

Sydnee: And figure out if there's something else you need to be doing.

Justin: Yeah.

Sydnee: For most of us, constipation is just something you get momentarily irritated by, and then it alleviates on its own, and it's certainly not causing all of these other diseases, and fixing it is not the cure all—

Justin: Right.

Sydnee: — that I think a lot of people claim it to be. So the best advice is probably not too different from the seven-second poop trick.

Justin: There it is. This—

Sydnee: Hydration is important, a— a well-balanced diet with fiber in it is important, and also staying active. I think a lot of times constipation becomes something we struggle with more maybe as we become less active in our life.

It's associated a lot with becoming elderly. Not all elderly people are sedentary, but if you have pains and arthritis and stuff, it can get harder to be up and moving, and just being active can help. Not even necessarily exercise, but just getting up and moving regularly.

Justin: Mm.

Sydnee: Can be helpful, but that is the seven-second poop trick.

Justin: Or at last one of them.

Sydnee: One of them.

Justin: Somewhere in there [chuckles] is the seven-second poop trick.

Sydnee: You will find a lot of them out there, I think that this is just— If something's catching.

Justin: Yeah.

Sydnee: Everybody wants to get on that poop bandwagon.

Justin: Hey, thank you so much to listening to our podcast. We hope that you are... hangin' in there, and we really appreciate you coming back and visiting with us every single week. We hope that you are happy to be here as well.

Thank you so much to MaximumFun for having us as a part of their podcasting family. Also thank to the Taxpayers, speaking of the Taxpayers, who did make our intro song, they have a new album coming out called *Circle Breaker*. That's coming on March 25th, you can follow them at Instagram.

Sydnee: Mm!

Justin: The_Taxpayers.

[theme music fades in]

Sydnee: That's exciting.

Justin: That's gonna do it for us for this week. Until next time, my name is Justin McElroy.

Sydnee: I'm Sydnee McElroy.

Justin: And as always, don't drill a hole in your head.

[outro theme music plays]

[ukulele chord]

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