Bedside Manner?

By: Greg Laub

Some time ago, I was jogging into the parking lot at The Meadowlands sports complex for a football game, and slipped on a patch of ice. I started to stand up, but immediately realized that this would not be possible -- for the next six months. Hey, that's the bottom of my foot looking up at me!

What a creepy feeling in my stomach -- seeing my ankle turned inward so far that it is stuck at a 90 degree angle. Of course, I also had other feelings -- panic, fear, pain, and, for whatever reason, an overriding disappointment that I was probably going to have to miss the game.

I laid my ankle flat on the ice, hoping that would help. After a few seconds (I think) the ankle suddenly crunched back into place. Yes, crunched. Oh, did I mention I was alone? Yeah, good times. I was lying down outside the stadium, out of view from anyone, and the only person I knew at the game was my father, who was already inside -- sans cell phone -- waiting to meet me.

So I called 911 on my cell phone and said that, frankly, I broke my leg and need a ride to the hospital. An ambulance came and took me to the Meadowlands Hospital, where I called my mother to see if she could contact my dad, to let him know I wasn't going to show up. While I knew it was probably broken, the optimist in me was praying the whole time that it was just a sprain. A really, really, really bad sprain.

An hour later, after the x-rays, I'm sitting alone in the hospital hallway, in dire need of some good news. Or at least some not-so-bad news. Or how about a smile and some false hope? But here comes the nurse, looking totally sorry for me. She winces and says with some uncertainty: "You really did a number on your ankle," and literally looked like she wanted to cry ...

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