



Trump's Medical Report Is More Insane Than His Campaign Somehow

Donald Trump's doctor released a medical report so silly that when we asked the American Medical Association about its language, their spokesman started to laugh.

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Donald Trump's doctor appears to be just as bombastic as he is.

It's the only conclusion to be drawn from a hilariously bizarre letter that the mogul's doctor—Harold Bornstein—wrote about his yuuuugely terrific health. And the letter raises as many questions as it answers.

Bornstein, a Manhattan gastroenterologist who shared a medical practice with his father, writes he has been Trump's doctor since 1980. His father, Jacob Bornstein, died in 2010 at the age of 93. But that didn't stop Trump from Twitter-thanking Bornstein the elder for writing up his letter.

"I am proud to share this health report, written by the highly respected Dr. Jacob Bornstein of Lenox Hill Hospital," the mogul tweeted, linking to the letter.

Trump later deleted the tweet, probably because Jacob Bornstein is dead. Harold Bornstein, however, is very much alive and says Donald Trump is the picture of health. In the letter, he describes his health over the past few decades using language that veers from standard to bizarre.

For example, he describes Trump's recent physical exam as "show[ing] only positive results."

While it's clear he means to say everything was normal, the word "positive" is an odd use of the term in medicine. Rather, it typically means that some result or finding was present—and those

findings aren't always great news (think testing positive for a disease). The wording is clearly chosen more for rhetorical effect than clear medical communication—and that choice left some experts scratching their heads.

“It’s very odd for a doctor to say, ‘He’s had a complete medical examination that showed only positive results,’” said Jonathan Moreno, a professor of medical ethics at the University of Pennsylvania. “Normally a positive result in the language of medicine is not a good thing. Nonetheless, I will not accuse Dr. Bornstein of not writing his own letter.”

Bornstein also describes Trump’s “laboratory test results” as “astonishingly excellent” (without noting which tests were run). That is a weird thing to say, as not many doctors would describe themselves as “astonished” at their patient’s lab results.

Like Trump, Bornstein seems allergic to detail. And there’s one conspicuous absence in the letter, according to Moreno: It has no mention of whether the mogul has ever had a colonoscopy. Bornstein is a gastroenterologist—not a general practitioner—so if Trump has had a colonoscopy, Bornstein probably did it. And at 69, Trump is of age to get the routine (if unpleasant) test.

“I think that’s a very reasonable question at this point for a journalist to ask: Has he had a colonoscopy?” said Moreno.

If the mogul has had one, Moreno added, voters may be curious as to whether the exam found any colon polyps and, if so, if any had to be removed. A Trump spokesperson did not respond to a request for comment on whether the real estate magnate has had a colonoscopy or had any colon polyps removed.

The letter uses standard language to report that Trump is cancer-free and hasn’t had any significant surgeries. An interesting omission, however, in a letter that goes out of its way to praise Trump’s “extraordinary” strength and stamina is the status of those bone spurs that were so bad they kept him out of serving in Vietnam. Maybe they got better all on their own, as the report makes clear he’s never had any orthopedic surgeries.

And then it goes completely off the rails.

“If elected,” Bornstein writes, “Mr. Trump, I can state unequivocally, will be the healthiest individual ever elected to the presidency.”

This is, of course, hooey. It’s embarrassing that a doctor even wrote it—unless, of course, Bornstein time-traveled to the 19th century to check on Millard Fillmore and William Henry Harrison. Reached for comment regarding this, a spokesperson at the American Medical Association just giggled.

They weren’t the only ones who found the comment perplexing.

“I don’t want to question Dr. Bornstein,” said Jeffrey Singer, a practicing general surgeon and adjunct scholar at the libertarian Cato Institute. “But doctors don’t usually say that kind of thing.”

“I could understand Donald Trump saying that, because that’s the kind of thing he says—just like he’s the smartest guy and the richest guy and all that,” Singer continued. “But doctors don’t usually make those kind of superlative comments.”

Unless, of course, you’re Donald Trump’s doctor.