

# Home Health Care

by Gita M. Smith

Perplexed, she walked to the mirror and peered closely. Yes, there was no mistaking the new protuberance on her right temple. She was growing a second head.

Marvella switched to her magnifying makeup mirror and -- sure enough -- the carbuncle had a miniature set of facial features and the beginnings of a hairline.

She didn't know whether a second head would be an asset or a liability. If it evolved into a smart head -- a mathy-sciencey-computer programmerish little noggin -- then, yes, sure, that would be worth the cost of new hats.

But what if it grew into a nasty tea party-ish bimbo right winger - - a little Michelle Bachmann nubbin that yakked about the rights of embryos and the faults of Mexican lettuce pickers?

Marvella spent the following day and night combing the internet (WebMD, the Mayo Clinic, the Psychic Friends Hotline) for indicators.

Second heads, she concluded, were notoriously unpredictable. Some never uttered a word. Others contradicted everything that came out of one's mouth. She read examples of terrible social embarrassment.

**MAN IN BAR:** *Hello, young lady, may I say how attractive you look tonight?*

**HIS SECOND HEAD:** *Hey, Babe, care to ride my Chattanooga choo-choo?*

Marvella shuddered. She considered severing ties with the temple lump. "Second Head Support Services" in Michigan offered "a safe, permanent solution" involving outpatient surgery for "only" \$42,500.

Marvella examined the side of her head one last time, just to be sure. The lump had grown tiny ears and was, in fact, maturing with every passing hour.

"Fuck it," Marvella muttered as she reached for a large do-it-yourself bread knife. "It ain't brain surgery."

