

## To Avoid Surgery, Eat This Camera

*More Doctors Get Inside View Of the Body With Video Pill; Close-Ups of a Tumor Site*

By MARILYN CHASE

**K**RISTEN PARSKE WAS TIRED of not knowing what was wrong with her. The 33-year-old homemaker was dangerously anemic from internal bleeding and had undergone a colonoscopy, barium X-rays and six other uncomfortable procedures and scans, but doctors pinpointed the source.

Ms. Parske, in Sacramento, could have had exploratory surgery—a big operation with a six-week recovery. But she had a new option: swallowing a miniature camera in a pill. With one- and two-year-old daughters to care for, she went for the video pill.

Every year a million Americans get procedures done to examine the small intestine. Often, it takes test after test

or even surgery to figure out what is wrong. The problems that can strike include ulcers, tumors, leaky vessels and inflammatory conditions like Crohn's disease and irritable bowel syndrome. But the upper intestine is hard to see with conventional imaging tools. "The 22 feet between the stomach and colon has been a black box," says Gavriel Meron, chief executive of Given Imaging Inc., the Yoqneam, Israel, company that makes the technology.

The tiny disposable camera in a plastic shell, known as a video capsule, is swallowed and passes through the small intestine. It takes pictures and transmits them to a recording device. The procedure, which costs as much as \$1,500, is covered by insurers

in 24 states, 17 of those with Medicare coverage, plus Washington, D.C., Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Because it is new, the video pill is mostly used after conventional tests have failed, says Robynne Chutkan, a gastroenterologist at Georgetown University Hospital in Washington, D.C., it already has carved a key role in solving the mystery of a key source of internal bleeding whose source is unknown. Capsule endoscopy is "an amazing technology," says Ms. Parske's surgeon, Gregg Jossart. He sees a number of patients like Ms. Parske for whom "it will mean quicker diagnosis and cure."

Ms. Parske swallowed the smooth plastic capsule, which is like an oversize vitamin, and donned a thick Velcro belt loaded with a battery pack and a Walkman-size recording device. Electronic leads were attached to her torso. Over the next eight hours, she was free to stroll, eat or drink as the device meandered through her body, taking 60,000 flash pictures—two per second—and transmitting the pictures to the recording device. The single-use capsule passed out painlessly after 24 hours.

Then she returned the gear she had worn to her hospital, California Pacific Medical Center in San Francisco, where gastroenterologist Kenneth Binmoeller and nurse Martie Mattson loaded the data recorder onto a workstation.

**'Fantastic Voyage'**

On the screen, views of her body's interior unfolded like scenes from the 1966 sci-fi film "Fantastic Voyage," where doctors explore the body in a tiny submarine. Her intestine, a pulsing, well-lit tunnel, was marbled with vessels resembling the canals on Mars. "It was like being there," said Ms. Mattson while reviewing the video, freezing a frame. The capsule's descent, the screen displayed a shiny red crater—an ulcer eroding the inner intestinal wall. The ulcer, the source of Ms. Parske's anemia, was caused by a stromal cell tumor, a golf-ball-size growth of muscle cells, on the outer wall of the intestine. While benign, such tumors bleed, and later can turn malignant.

Dr. Jossart used data from the video pill to target the bleeding site. On June 3, he performed laparoscopic surgery to

(over please)

# Reprinted from BARRON'S

January 13, 2003

© 2003 Dow Jones & Company, Inc. All Rights Reserved.

## THE ELECTRONIC INVESTOR

Edited by Randall W. Forsyth

# Getting the Goods

*Several Websites allow online sleuthing for information on companies and people*

*(the following has been excerpted:)*

REVIEWED by KATHY YAKAL

SO FAR, 2003 IS LOOKING BETTER THAN the year just ended. The stock market is up and dividend tax relief looks like it's coming. Yet uncertainties still abound. All you can do is your due diligence, for which the World Wide Web provides the best leads.

The same easy availability of personal information that makes some of us hesitate to enter sensitive data on a Website also makes it easier for us to get the goods on people and companies whose credibility we might want to investigate. While you can't necessarily expect to catch the next corporate crook by searching databases on the Web, you can find some tools there that can greatly expand your research capability.

LexisNexis ([www.lexisnexis.com](http://www.lexisnexis.com)), a division of **Reed Elsevier**, is the obvious such tool to mention first. Its scope is too broad to outline completely here; suffice it to say you'd be hard pressed to find a more comprehensive research service. The company started as a resource for the legal profession in 1973, but has grown exponentially to serve as a rich information source for myriad professions and individuals.

As an investor, you'd most likely want to use the service for two kinds of searches: information about companies and information about people. The research offered here is deeper than that found on traditional investor Websites, since LexisNexis draws from thousands of written sources, including newspapers and magazines, public and legislative records, and corporate data. And the price is steeper: You can pay by the article or subscribe for the day or the week.

There are three ways to search. You can select a profession, an industry, or a task, and the site pops up the resources most likely to aid in your search. You

could search a specific industry for company and people analysis, or go for the collection of information and data available on Business & Industry Research. The site provides detailed descriptions of all the individual products and services currently available.

If you want information about a particular individual, LexisNexis provides some of the most thorough records to be had. Again, this is a service for the diligent investor with a research budget.

Along the way, you can search for records like marriage and divorce, and run background checks. You can check for asset ownership and value, and verify professional licenses. And you can request business reports and other corporate information. All of which can be helpful to investors investigating people and places that might handle their money.

The site has no registration or subscription fees, and the costs are usually minimal – with the price of business reports being the highest.

▶AND SPEAKING OF PLACES THAT MIGHT handle your money, it's on to taxes. If you want to get a jump on this year's chore before the W-2s and 1099s come drifting in, there are numerous sites that provide general income-tax information.

The first – and in some ways the best – site to check out is the Internal Revenue Service site ([www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov)), as we recommend every year. The site's been revamped since we visited it last year, but it's just as easy to navigate, which is impressive when you consider its mammoth size.

Links on the opening page take you to topics of particular interest, for example, how to make the most of stock losses and

a guide to tax scams and frauds. If you click on the Individuals link, more topics of interest are displayed. You can also search the site for forms and publications, or for specific content.

If you haven't yet investigated the Nolo site for legal issues, you should consider going there if you have questions about tax law. Go to [www.nolo.com](http://www.nolo.com) and click on the Plain-English Law Centers link, then down and punch Taxes & Audits. Here you'll find information on topics ranging from dealing with the IRS to and appeals to tax bills.

The Kiplinger site ([www.kiplinger.com/managing/taxes](http://www.kiplinger.com/managing/taxes)) is great at making complex tax issues understandable. Current articles cover territory like audits, hiring a professional, and the new tax laws. A glossary, refund estimator, and profiles of state tax obligations also help enhance your knowledge.

Fairmark Press ([www.fairmark.com](http://www.fairmark.com)) is another name that's synonymous with reliable tax information. Its Website is an amalgam of reference and interactive tools. You can search for IRS forms and publications by number (if you know it), or by category (i.e., itemized deductions, work and retirement, and investments). Online tax guides on topics like wash sales, capital gains, and the Alternative Minimum Tax are accompanied by book recommendations should you want to give the matter further study. Current news, a reference room, and tax-related message boards round out what is an excellent taxpayer resource.

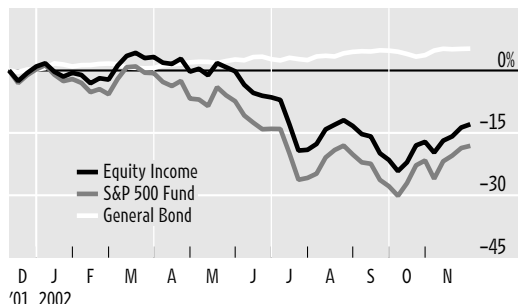
And where taxes are concerned, **Yahoo!** does what Yahoo! does best. Its Tax Center ([taxes.yahoo.com](http://taxes.yahoo.com)) pulls tips, information, and other resources from some of the best suppliers on the Web. These include Bankrate, Smart Money, and Fairmark. Message boards, calculators, and forms are also available here, in an easily navigable compendium.

## MUTUAL FUNDS

### Mutual-Fund Scorecard/Equity Income

#### Investment Objective:

Stock funds seeking relatively high current income and growth of income through investing mostly in dividend-paying securities.



#### 10 Biggest Funds

FUND NAME	TOTAL RETURN FOR PERIOD ENDED DECEMBER 6				ASSETS (millions)	PHONE NUMBER
	SINCE 12/31	1 YEAR	3 YEARS	5 YEARS		
Fidelity Equity-Inc	-15.2%	-15.6%	-4.2%	+1.0%	\$17,247.4	800-544-8888
Fidelity Equity-Inc II	-12.1	-12.8	-4.1	+2.2	9,428.8	800-544-8888
T Rowe Price Eq Inc;Shs	-11.4	-11.4	+0.2	+3.1	2,255.1	800-225-5132
Van Kampen Eqty Inc;A	-7.7	-8.1	-1.1	+2.2	2,255.1	800-421-5666
Scudder Drem Hl Ptn;A	-7.5	-8.1	-1.1	+2.2	1,100.0	800-621-1048
Vanguard Eqty Inc;A	-7.5	-8.1	-1.1	+2.2	1,100.0	800-662-7447
MFS Value;A	-7.5	-8.1	-1.1	+5.8	1,881.3	800-637-2929
Fidelity Adv	-13.5	-14.0	-1.8	+1.8	1,791.8	800-522-7297
USAA Income Stock	-17.7	-17.0	-4.6	-0.4	1,426.0	800-531-8181
Putnam Equity Income;A	-11.6	-11.2	-1.1	+2.3	1,296.5	800-225-1581
Avg. For Category	-14.8%	-15.2%	-4.5%	+0.4%		
Number Of Funds	190	182	164	135		

#### Past Year's Top Performers

FAM Equity Income	-1.4%	+2.9%	+11.5%	N.A.	\$65.7	800-932-3271
Parnassus:Equity Income	-1.4	-1.3	+5.7	+10.2%	192.7	800-999-3505
Amer Cent:Eq Inc;Inv	-4.1	-2.5	+8.7	+8.2	1,098.4	800-345-2021
PIMCO:Eqty Inc;Inst	-5.9	-4.5	N.S.	N.S.	29.8	800-927-4648
H&W:Large Cap Value;I	-6.7	-6.8	+3.2	+2.6	34.3	800-796-5606
Gabelli Eq:Eq Income	-7.6	-6.9	+0.7	+4.9	176.5	800-422-3554
TCW Galileo:Inc+Gro;N	-8.3	-7.2	+10.2	+6.0	26.8	800-386-3829
Morg Stan Inc Bldr;B	-7.5	-8.0	-1.1	-0.2	141.1	800-869-6397
Van Kampen Eqty Inc;A	-7.7	-8.1	+3.1	+6.8	2,639.6	800-421-5666
1st Sree Mngm In Eq	-11.0	-10.0	+3.7	+5.0	48.3	800-766-8938

#### Past Year's Bottom Performers

Kelmoore Str:Strat;C	-22.8%	-27.0%	-16.8%	N.S.	\$90.4	877-328-9456
Expedition:Eqty Inc;Inst	-25.4	-26.5	N.S.	N.S.	13.9	800-992-2085
Seligman Common Stk;A	-24.6	-26.3	-15.8	-6.4%	263.1	800-221-7844
Riverfrt:Sel Val;Inv A	-22.6	-25.4	-14.9	-7.5	11.4	800-424-2295
Kelmoore Str:Liberty;A	-21.0	-23.7	N.S.	N.S.	12.5	877-328-9456

Many funds have multiple share classes (typically indicated by a letter at the end of the fund's name) with different sales charges and annual expenses. When funds have multiple classes, the largest is included. Table includes only those funds on Nasdaq's primary and supplemental lists. Three-year and five-year returns are annualized. Date of assets may vary; most data updated monthly, with about a 15-day lag. N.A.-Not available. N.S.-Not started at beginning of period.

Source: Lipper