

21 Tips for Patients on How to Be Good Patients: From Health Care Professionals

Ok, it is time to be brutally honest to our patients. As health care professionals, we want to take amazing care of them. We want them to heal. We want them to feel better. But sometimes the greatest barrier to taking care of our patients, are in fact the patients themselves.

A few rotten apples have led so many medical providers to unfortunately become jaded. With these tips, we can hopefully stop the vicious cycle of jaded professionals and ultimately provide better health care.



“I see your point, saying I have 10/10 pain while texting was probably inappropriate”

Alas, here are 21 tips for patients when receiving medical care. Let’s get the word out, save some lives, and make our days/nights better!

- Do not check into the emergency department with fast food or a soda can in hand, especially if you have a intestinal complaint.
- Refrain from cussing out your nurse, doctor, PA, NP, receptionist, or anyone else trying to help you.
- Never state your pain is 10/10 [while texting on your phone](#).
- Check your panniculi (fat rolls) for food or foreign objects before coming to the hospital. Try to clean them out. There is nothing more embarrassing than us finding a fried chicken leg in a deep fold.

- Do not push the call light for help or for a turkey sandwich immediately after your nurse has left.
- Do not think your nurse is your personal waiter or waitress at a restaurant or an employee at the Hilton.
- Please keep your arm or wrist straight if your IV is positional, unless you enjoy listening to [Michael Bolton](#).
- Surprising as it may seem, remember that there are actually other, probably way sicker patients than you in a hospital. Have some patience.
- Stop saying "[I have a really high pain tolerance.](#)" You are here in pain, so NO you likely don't.
- Don't blame nurses or other staff for being too busy. Blame hospital administrators for continuing to raise the patient to staff ratio.
- Don't cherry pick your Do Not Resuscitate (DNR) status. Either make it DNR or a Full Code.
- Please stop pretending to have a seizure in the emergency department. WE ALL know when you are faking.
- A simple "Thank you" or "I appreciate it" goes a long way when talking to your care givers.
- Try to refrain from spitting or throwing feces at your health care providers.
- Nausea or constipation symptoms are not allergic reactions.
- "Heart races" is not an allergic reaction to epinephrine.
- [Spider bite to your AC?](#) Really. Please stop using this excuse and come up with something better to hide your drug abuse. Many hospitals are now just dispensing Dilaudid if you ask for it.
- Never, ever, start a sentence with "Dr. Oz says."
- If you can't remember what medications you take, write them down so we don't have to rely on our extremely accurate (thick sarcasm) computer EHR systems to "just look them up."
- If you have a pacemaker or ICD, keep a goddamn card in your wallet or purse with the manufacturer info. Seriously, you have a AARP card and a Cracker Barrel gift card in there, but nothing on your pacemaker?
- If you don't have real contraindications to vaccinations, VACCINATE! Why are we even having this discussion in the year 2018?!