

What Your Family Medicine Doctor Is Thinking About When You Think She Is Not Listening To You

By Carol Ways, MD

Feeling sorry for being late or behind and wondering if you're mad or in a hurry.

Worrying about whether it is possible to get to every thing in 15-20 minutes on the list you have brought in.

Wondering why the AARP suggests a patient bring in a list of what you want to talk a bout with the doctor without specifying a limit to the number of problems on the list?

Hoping some of the problems on your list relate to others, as you have helpfully listed every past and present symptom related to your problems.

Wondering whether you can afford gas and copay, to come back for the rest of the list we did not get to today.

And thinking about why you are you complaining about the rectal exam when she is the one doing it.

Deciding which form for CT is required by your insurance and if it is covered and does it need a prior auth.

Charting HPI, ROS, and PE and calculating the correct billing code

Paying attention to what your mom or your companion just asked.

Checking whether all the pertinent health maintenance necessary was ordered; such as colonoscopy, mammo-gram, cholesterol.

And why didn't the gastroenterologist notify you of the colonoscopy result that you are asking about? He should because he gets paid over \$500 for 20 minutes of work for that procedure.

Remembering to ask if you had your flu shot and do you exercise and did you quit smoking; and all the non dramatic health measures that will save your life even though you don't think they will.

Thinking about the last patient who said she would not get a mammogram because she feels too fat.

Checking if your meds interact with any of your other meds?

Remembering to ask if you are having any side effects from your medications.

And does that prescription need to be for 30 days or 90 days and is there a generic available, and what is your copay for medications.

Wondering if you will take the medication prescribed.

Remembering the last patients story about her father having Alzheimer's, and having to be taken everywhere with her. He didn't mind going to get a pedicure with her. He got one to

Feeling empathy because you're crying, but knowing that you need more time to cry than was scheduled for your appointment.

Being aware that there's somebody else waiting to be seen with problems just as bad as yours.

Then you say, oh by the way. I'm having crushing sub-sternal chest pain radiating down my left arm, at the very end of the visit and do you need to worry about this doctor. And the doctor is thinking, you do need to worry about it and now I need to worry about it and why didn't you tell me this in the beginning before you told me about your fungal toenails, because this might kill you but your toenails won't.

Reminding herself to call the doctor in the ER about the patient that was sent over this morning with the worst headache of his life?

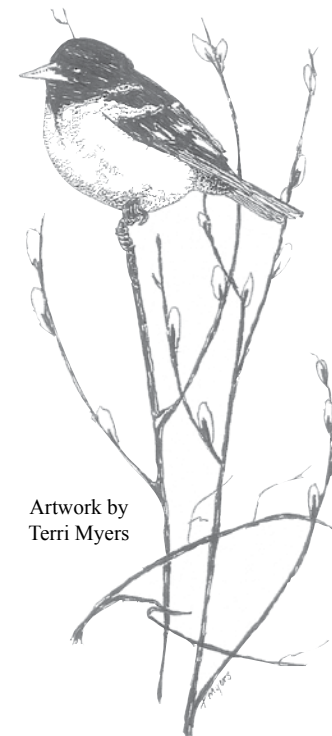
Questioning if you are really allergic to penicillin or was that rash a few months ago actually from poison ivy.

Not knowing what to say when you comment about the doctors' haircut. It only reminds her that her best friend who is dying of breast cancer said that fake wigs are hotter than real ones, so she donated her hair; only to be reminded daily that her friend is dying.

And now trying to leave gracefully without appearing in a hurry, although there are so many more patients to take care of.

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Carol Ways, MD, MPH, has had a family medicine practice in Ann Arbor for 25 years. She completed four year training programs in Bioenergetics and Hands of Light, and also a three year training program in Kabbalistic healing. She uses that background in the service of a traditional medical practice.



Artwork by Terri Myers

The Crazy Wisdom Salon January 15, 2009 7 PM in the Tea Room

Men's Lives and Stories

The winter season of the Salon series begins with an evocative evening devoted to *Men's Lives and Stories*.

Seven Men from Ann Arbor's Longest Running Men's Group (30 years!) will speak about what gets discussed in their men's group, and the role the group has played in their lives. Both men and women are welcome. There will be an opportunity for questions and conversation. The evening will also be an opportunity for interested men to consider whether they would like to be part of this long-running men's group, or to form a new one...

The speakers will be: Social Work Professor Emeritus Charles Garvin, Music Therapy Professor Michael McGuire, Philosophy Emeritus Professor Richard Gull, Social Workers Michael Andes, Jim Wilton and Cam Vozar, and Crazy Wisdom owner Bill Zirinsky.

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WORKSHOPS

February 7, 10:30 - 1:00 or

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Crazy Wisdom Community Room

Registration Not Required ~ \$75

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