

VENICE PLASTIC SURGERY

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Cosmetic, Reconstructive, Face, Breast, and Hand Surgery

It is appropriate to change doctors

What should one do when you and your doctor just do not seem to communicate. At times personalities clash. It may be time to change doctors. This is appropriate.

I had a patient once who came to see me one time for an evaluation of skin cancers. They did not return for their follow up appointment. The office manager called to ask why. The patient stated they thought I was just not serious enough, too many jokes. Many go to the doctor only when they are sick. I feel a little humor relaxes the patient and shows I may be more down to earth. This patient did not agree and moved on to another doctor. You should never feel guilty about searching for a doctor that meets your own personality requirements.

There are enough doctors to satisfy most patients. You should look around. The limiting factor these days is your insurance plan. I had a patient sent to me from the emergency room for an ear wound. We checked with his insurance company before attempting to fix the wound. They told us his plan allowed for him to see any doctor he wanted to, however the plan would not pay for his care unless the doctor was on the approved list. As it turned out the patient had to go to Tampa. That was the closest location of a doctor listed on his plan. This amazed me especially when the insurance company tells the patient he is allowed to go to any doctor he wished.

Some people try to find doctors that give the diagnosis or treatment option the patient is specifically looking for. The patient already knows how they want to fix a problem and seeks a doctor who agrees with their plan. If this is your plan do not give up the original doctor just yet. You may not find anybody that shares your treatment ideas. Find a new doctor first before you give up the old one.

I have come across patients who have told their original doctor to take a hike then developed a health problem before finding a new doctor. It is better not to be stuck in this situation.

Some people sign up for a health plan up north, then come here for a few months. They develop a health problem and have to go back up north for care. There are no doctors in this area on that particular plan. If you are here for any length of time you should have a family doctor in town as well. Will the plan cover you while driving across the country on a vacation?

In conclusion changing doctors can and should occasionally be done. Get your new physician lined up before leaving the old one. Check with your insurance carrier. Maybe it would be a good idea to have your attorney check the insurance contract and interpret it for you to make certain there are no surprises. Before signing any plan insist on seeing the full and current list of participating doctors. Also check to see if they still pay for any doctor that might have to see you on an urgent or emergency situation.

The above represents the opinion of A. E. Haas, M.D.

Venice Plastic Surgery, Venice Wound Center, Lakeside Medical Center

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