

VENICE PLASTIC SURGERY

A.E. HAAS, M.D.

Cosmetic, Reconstructive, Face, Breast, and Hand Surgery

Why House Calls

Doctors still make home visits on occasion, at least I do. It would be very convenient for our patients if the doctor went to see them instead of the patient going to see the doctor. This is particularly true for my wound patients. We are telling them to stay off their feet, keep the legs elevated and rest. Staying home would help maintain this regimen.

For me a local house call will take over an hour. I have to gather up the necessary bandage supplies then drive over to the patient. This is the hard part. Most patients cannot describe how to get to their houses accurately. Once at the patient's house I survey the living conditions, the bed, the supplies they use. I then tend to the wound. After discussion with the patient and family I drive back to the office. This may take a while especially in season. Then I put the unused supplies back in storage and fill out the patient's chart.

The problem is that often the planned treatment is inappropriate and another course of action must be taken. In wound care there are hundreds of dressing choices. It is impossible to bring all the supplies that could be needed for the best care. In the clinic we have several types of dressings in stock, surgical equipment may be needed to excise a portion of the wound. If something is bleeding a few stitches may need to be sewn in. The list of possibilities is endless.

We also have the ability to clean leg wounds better with a whirlpool. There are several staff members available to help position and lift the patient for a better exam or for bandaging. If lab tests are needed we can do this at the clinic. If another physician needs to be contacted or a fax sent we can do it. The computer terminal allows for easy access to previous test results. An X-Ray may be obtained. All the forms we need for scheduling tests are in the clinic.

Today patient care is much more complex than it was in the past. Efficiency and appropriate care means having all supplies and resources immediately available. Having current and past test data is a must. Working with skilled nurses at hand makes for better care. Sterile instruments are often needed for wound care.

Fortunately we have home health nurses that can bridge the gap. Using these skilled professionals can stretch out the interval between doctor's office visits. The home nurses fill their cars with supplies. These nurses are able to make medical assessments of the wound and the patient's well being. They also spend extra time with the families to educate them about patient care.

The system works well. We are able to better treat the patient while seeing them in the office less often. Many times hospitalization is avoided. Welcome to the marvels of modern medicine.

**The above represents the opinion of A. E. Haas, M.D.
Venice Plastic Surgery, Venice Wound Center, Lakeside Medical Center**

Just call us directly. No referral needed unless required by your insurance company

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