



# Best Doctors® Report

SUMMER/FALL 2010



## WHEN YOU NEED TO BE ABSOLUTELY SURE.

*Best Doctors helps Canadians navigate the healthcare system through one-on-one coaching and support and connects seriously ill members and their treating physicians with world renowned specialists to confirm the correct diagnosis and correct treatment plan, without ever having to leave home. In the past twenty years we've changed a diagnosis 22% of the time and modified 61% of treatment plans.*



### What to ask a doctor about: YOUR SURGERY

If you've been scheduled for surgery, you need to be prepared with a level head, and as much information as you can get. Try to build a list of questions like these:

1. What kind of surgery do I need?
2. What are the benefits and risks of surgery?
3. How successful is this surgery?
4. How long will I be in the hospital?
5. Is there any other treatment?
6. What if I wait or don't have the surgery?

Best Doctors works with your treating physician to help you with all your healthcare issues. If you have a question call Best Doctors and we'll help you get the answers you need.

## TIME (AND DOCTORS) WAIT FOR FOR NO-ONE.

**On average you'll have about 7 minutes with your doctor. Make it count.** It's not news: doctors are busy people, with many patients to see every day. If you're one of them, you can expect to have your doctor's attention for about 7 minutes. Seem too short? Here's how to maximize your time.

### Give complete, detailed information.

Choose your words carefully and be as clear as you can. It will help your doctor pinpoint your problem.

**Don't diagnose yourself.** Based on a full, accurate description of your symptoms, your physician will draw the appropriate medical conclusions. That's why you go to see a doctor, after all.

**Bring a complete list of all of the medications you take.** Include the dosage amount and schedule. This can help your doctor avoid unwanted negative drug interactions when prescribing new medications.

### Take notes to help you remember.

Discussing a serious condition with your doctor can be overwhelming and you may miss or forget an important point. Take notes to help you remember, or bring along a friend or family member.

**Ask questions.** You should leave your appointment with a clear understanding of your medical condition, medication, treatment plan, or next steps. Don't be shy about asking questions.

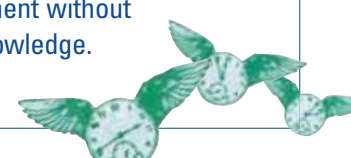
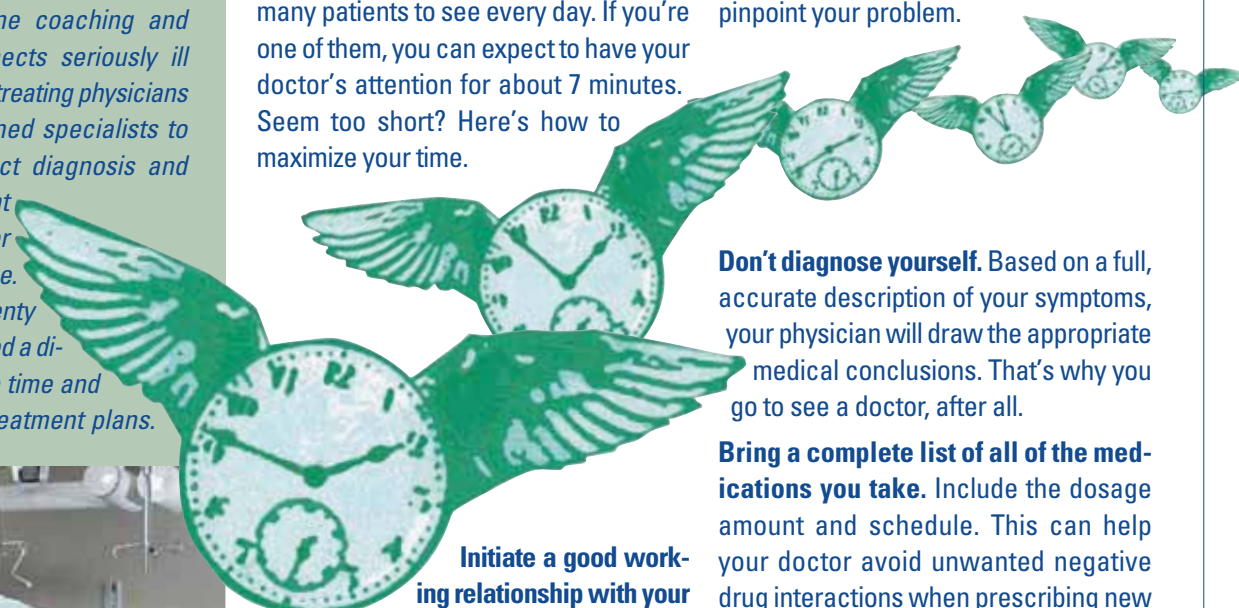
**Follow instructions.** It's your responsibility to follow the course of treatment as given. If you encounter any problems in the course of treatment it's important to report them to your doctor. And never abandon a medication or course of treatment without your doctor's knowledge.

### Initiate a good working relationship with your doctor.

Built on mutual trust and good communication, the ideal doctor-patient relationship is a two-way street. Information is shared and doctor and patient work together to make decisions.

**Actively prepare for your doctor's appointment.** Know what you want to say: define your health issue and state it precisely. Keep a written account so you can describe your condition – what feelings or discomfort you have, how the sensations feel, where in your body they occur and when. Your doctor will gather all this information in any case, but preparing in advance saves time.

**Write down your questions before your appointment.** Prioritize the issues that are most important to you. Then begin your appointment by discussing the issue you feel is most important.





## Valerie's Story: fast action and a reliable diagnosis



*"I was so scared when I received the news. I called Best Doctors right away and they started an InterConsultation™ immediately. My Member Advocate, a Registered Nurse, gathered all my medical records and pathology. Everything was sent to the Best Doctors team of Harvard-trained specialists for review. Even my pathology was re-*

### VALERIE FOUND A LUMP IN HER NECK.

Her family doctor assured her it was nothing to worry about but gave her a requisition for an ultrasound to check it. The ultrasound was scheduled for October 4th, which is the normal six month wait time in New Brunswick. Her physician contacted the Radiology Department and had the date moved forward to August 6th – still a 4 month wait! Valerie called Best Doctors.

**WITHIN 2 WEEKS** Best Doctors was able to arrange an ultrasound for Valerie at a clinic in Guelph, Ontario. The ultrasound showed two nodules on her thyroid, so while she was still in Ontario, the Imaging Specialist contacted a friend who was an Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgeon in nearby Oakville. Valerie was seen immediately – on June 15th.

**JULY 30** Valerie had lifesaving surgery. *"Had I not called Best Doctors, I would still be waiting in New Brunswick for two more months just to get an ultrasound. Instead I had already had surgery and was back home recovering."*

**AUGUST 12** Valerie's thyroid biopsy came back and she was diagnosed with thyroid cancer.

*tested. Then they chose the specialist best suited for my condition from their global network. The specialist reviewed my file and provided the final diagnosis and treatment recommendations to me in a written report."*

**A BRIGHT FUTURE** To Valerie's great relief the Best Doctors Final Report said there was no sign of malignancy.

*"The Best Doctors people are so personable, so genuine; they really care about you. I'm sure Julie, my Member Advocate, was even more excited than I was with pathology report from Toronto stating there was no evidence of malignancy."*

*When I thought everyone else had forgotten about me, Best Doctors was always in touch, keeping me informed. My family and I would have spent weeks worrying because my doctors were too busy to thoroughly explain things to me, but Best Doctors were always so willing to answer all my questions. Best Doctors made such a difference in my life and the lives of my husband and two small children. It was life changing for us. There are no words that can truly express my gratitude."*

## SIGNIFICANT DIGITS The cost of absenteeism

# 75 billion

Dollars spent annually in health-care costs and lost productivity as a result of absenteeism

# 102,000,000

Work days lost in 2006

# 975,000

In 2008, the number of full-time employees who were absent from work for all or part of one week

# 12

12% of payroll: the cost of lost productivity due to chronic conditions

# 10

Work days per year are lost for personal reasons

## Information Cures Absenteeism

Best Doctors can help employees return to their lives sooner, active and healthy. The result is increased productivity, reduced absenteeism and lower staff costs. Employees, along with their treating doctors, are connected to internationally renowned medical experts ensuring correct diagnoses and treatment plan recommendations. Without ever having to leave home or incur any additional costs.