How many chairs in your MD’s wait room are taken up by drug reps?

July 29, 2011 By Mike Barr

My doc had about seven, maybe eight, chairs in the waiting area. That was for a group practice of five physicians. Two and sometimes three seats were pretty much perennially filled with a handsome (usually male: they knew their audience), well dressed, roller bag toting salesmen, waiting to pounce, for that 5 or 10 second exchange and if they were really lucky maybe a quick autograph, the minute one of the physicians came out to summon in the next appointment.

Only one in five doctors refuse to let drug reps into their offices during office hours. I am proud to count my (new) doc-- all the way back to the late 1990s-- as one of them.

Of course the flip side of this stat is that a full 80% embrace the intrusion. The betrayal of patient confidentiality may well be the chief reason the Don’t Tread On Me minority Just Say No to swarmy pill pushers in the office, but a sincere desire to draw a clear line between what is in the best interest of any given patient vs. what is in the best interest of a drug outfit and its hot new drug may also enter into the equation. We can only hope that this trend catches on.

I came across this statistic in the Duff Wilson piece on the front page of today’s NYT Business section. It’s kind of a great article. I am happy to learn that I wasn’t missing anything by not having Epocrates on my phone.

Michael Barr is a board certified acupuncturist and herbalist and can be reached at Manhattan Acupuncture Associates, with offices at Columbus Circle and Flatiron. His expertise and interests include sports acupuncture, pain syndromes, liver health, immunological support, low energy, mood disorders, anxiety, insomnia, GI complaints, and herbal and acupuncture approaches to getting off/putting off prescription medications of unsatisfactory or unclear benefit, and in helping to manage the side-effects of other necessary and life-saving biomedical interventions. He has also been busy exploring the application of Chinese herbal therapies, and specific acupuncture protocols, for all aspects of sexual health and anti-senescence.

© 2026 Smart + Strong All Rights Reserved.

http://beta.docker.poz.com/blog/many-chairs-mds-wait-room-taken-drug-reps