

BESTLIFE

The Single Worst Thing You Can Say to Your Doctor

DOCTORS NEVER WANT TO HEAR THIS FROM THEIR PATIENTS.



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A **doctor's visit** is an important way for you to take care of and stay on top of your health. But much of the value of the appointment comes from the communication between you and your doctor. You should listen to your doctor, provide relevant information, and even **ask your own pertinent questions**. However, some comments are best left *out* of the conversation. According to the experts themselves, the worst thing you can say to your doctor is, "I Googled this."

"As a doctor, I'm all about getting educated. However, Google searches can lead down a bad road and increase anxiety," says **Amir Karam**, MD, a **double board-certified surgeon** based in California.

According to Karam, Google searches often show and **describe health complications in the most extreme form**. However, health issues are specific to each person and "relative to many variables," which can place your complication anywhere on the scale of moderate to extreme.

"It's difficult for us practitioners to explain a situation when the patient has already researched the issue and has come to their own conclusion based on what they found on Google at 1 in the morning," Karam explains.

That doesn't mean you can't **interject your own thoughts and questions into the conversation** to make sure you're getting the most thorough care. **Rafael A. Lugo**, MD, a **general surgery specialist** and owner of Lugo Surgical Group, says he would just rather you reference reputable sources if you are going to bring up things you have researched on your own.

"I think a better way would be for the patient to go to a reputable site like WebMD and read the basics there," Lugo says. "Asking me questions is something I love, but don't premise it with 'but I read on Google...' Mention something like WebMD or a related peer review site."

Dimitar Marinov, MD, current **assistant professor** at the Varna Medical University, explains that bringing up previous internet research becomes particularly problematic when it calls into question the **expertise of actual health professionals**.

"The internet is full of unreferenced information," Marinov explains. "Personal blogs or forums can write literally anything, and unless it is written by a professional with medical credentials or referenced by solid scientific studies, you probably shouldn't trust the information."

But that doesn't mean you shouldn't be allowed to second guess your doctor, Marinov says. After all, every health professional isn't always right either. Instead of turning to Google, he recommends getting a "second opinion from another specialist." And no matter what health professional you see, there are some other comments you might also want to avoid during your next appointment. Read on to find out what else you shouldn't be saying. And before you schedule anything, **Dr. Fauci Says You Should Hold Off on This Annual Health Appointment**.

1 | "There is no way my symptoms could be caused by stress."



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"**Stress-related symptoms can be just as severe** and just as long-lasting as symptoms caused by any other form of illness," he says. "If you refuse to look into this, particularly when diagnostic tests have failed to show an organ disease or structural abnormality that explains the symptoms, then you are neglecting a potential path to relief that can be pursued even as your doctor continues to look into other possibilities." And for ways stress may be hurting you, discover **18 Silent Signs Your Stress Is Harming Your Health**.

2 | "I need this specific medication."

Through Google, people tend to "self-diagnose" themselves and believe they know exactly what they need to get help, says **Nikola Djordjevic**, MD, a general practitioner and **medical advisor for Health Careers**. The only problem is they need a doctor to sign off on their prescription, so they enter the appointment telling the doctor exactly what they *think* they need. But the reason doctors are responsible for your prescription is because they often know what will work best for you specifically, which may not be what a general Google search tells you. And to make sure you're taking the right meds, **This OTC Pain Medication Could Make You Take Dangerous Risks, Study Says**.

3 | "I have to go to the hospital."



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Again, your doctor typically knows what is best for you. Marinov says that if you need to be hospitalized, your doctor will make sure you get that care. Not every health problem requires a trip to the hospital. Plus, it's especially dangerous to try to force your way into a hospital setting during the COVID pandemic, as it's one of the **places you're most likely to contract the virus**, according to Marinov. And for problems you *should* talk to your doctor about, **These Are the Four Life-Threatening Things People Don't Tell Their Doctors**.

4 | "I can't get the flu shot because it gives me the flu."



Patients often come to appointments with these kind of misconceptions, and they usually feel strong in their convictions. However, **Christopher Drumm**, MD, a **family practitioner** with Norristown Family Physicians, notes that this is one of the **most common health myths**.

"Vaccines are almost never now made from live viruses," Drumm explains. "The **flu shot can cause a short-lasting immune response**, but it will not give you the flu." And for more useful content delivered straight to your inbox, **sign up for our daily newsletter**.