

### What Patients Really Mean

Most of us experienced guys ( translated: burnt out, bitter and fed up) already can “read between the lines” when our patients utter seemingly innocuous words such as “hello”, “how are you” and the worst phrase ever “remember me?”. However, this blog is not only meant to entertain but also to “educate” our newbie colleagues. This month’s blog will serve as a teachable (thanks Obummer for that catch phrase) moment so they can better prepare themselves to deal with the horde of maniacs they will encounter over 30 to 40 years of “meaningful” work. Here are some of my favorites:

1. New patient let’s loose with a stream of compliments and promises to send all of their friends to their new “wonderful doctor. Translation : you’re not going to charge me are you doc?
2. I’m allergic to Ibuprofen. Translation: I’m an addict and my stoner boyfriend just took my last 20 Vics.
3. I’m running 15 minutes late. Translation: I’m really going to be an hour late.
4. “Hesitant” woman after being presented with a large treatment plan responds to the ambitious doctor that she has to ask her husband first before starting. Translation: you’ll never see her again.
5. “I lost my Percocet prescription.” Translation: see number 2.
6. “Can’t you just fill it?” Translation: Don’t waste time with this one.
7. 92 year old retiree barges in and exclaims “ Hey Doc, that filling you did last month fell out”. “Alert” dentist reviews history and realizes this filling has been there since the Truman administration. Translation: patient wants a free filling.
8. “Hey Doc my new denture just cracked in eight pieces after I was eating jello.” Translation: patient dropped it in his driveway and ran over it with his car and wants a free “repair”.
9. “Hey Doc I can’t eat salad with this denture”. Transation: I want my money back.
10. “Hey Doc, how come I’m still in pain after you pulled that tooth yesterday?” Translation: call your malpractice carrier.

Happy Thanksgiving and be especially thankful you’re closed this week. If you’re open, my heartfelt condolences go out to you.