



John F. Dombrowski, MD, PC

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How has your service been thus far (front desk and Dr. Dombrowski)? *Usually excellent; never less than good; commendable*

Would you recommend Dr. Dombrowski's services to a friend? If not, why? *Yes. Have done so.*

Has Dr. Dombrowski met all your needs as a patient?

Yes - except for the 1 to 10 pain scale. I have also heard other patients (sometimes at other doctors' offices) question whether, for example, 1 means slight pain or feeling very good with 5 as feeling "average." I've also heard patients say that they plan to say "at least 8" to be sure of getting treatment. As far as Personal comments: I'm concerned a "better, worse, about the same, different" scale (maybe with sub-topics) would be better than the undefined numbers. Even the children's smile/frown scale is better!

(A) The new love seats are attractive; match the decor and color scheme. They are also miserably uncomfortable to sit on: too low, too soft, with something hard (probably to reinforce) at the front edge if one tries to perch there rather than sinking in. I've no expectation that this will be changed soon - but hope for higher, firmer future seating.
(B) A bell on the inside entry door might be too annoying for the front desk, but it is a crowded area with surprise openings.

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Because Dr. Dombrowski lets one describe pain, I'm satisfied with how seriously he takes one's subjective experience.

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Please see page 2. It is the "pain scale" that I find problematic.

In Reporting Symptoms, Don't Patients Know Best?

By DENISE GRADY

About six years ago, my doctor gave me some samples of a drug to treat pain from an injury. I took it for a few days and then woke up one morning with a big red blister on my tongue. I'd never had anything like it before, and I wondered if the pills might be to blame. They weren't helping much anyway, so I quit taking them. The blister went away. I mentioned it the next time I saw the doctor, but he said it must have been a coincidence.

Not long after, the drug, Bextra, was taken off the market in the United States. It had been linked to heart attacks and also to a dangerous condition called Stevens-Johnson syndrome — which can cause mouth blisters, among other things.

There's no way to know if Bextra caused my problem, but it seemed like a reasonable idea, and I never understood why my doctor was so quick to dismiss it.

The episode came to mind when I read an article in the March 11 New England Journal of Medicine by Dr. Ethan Basch, an oncologist who treats men with prostate cancer and does research at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center in New York. He argues that doctors, researchers, drug makers and regulators should pay more attention to patients' firsthand reports of their symptoms while they take medicines, because their information could help to guide treatment and research, and uncover safety problems.

Direct reports from patients are rarely used during drug approval or in clinical trials, Dr. Basch says. If patients' comments are sought at all, they are usually filtered through doctors and nurses, who write their own impressions of what the patients are feeling.