



## What You Don't Know Can Hurt You • *A Guide for Patients*

### Help for Navigating Medical Information & Making Informed Decisions

#### Delfini Group Evidence-based Practice Series

Sheri Ann Strite & Michael E. Stuart MD

#### Our Mission

We have written a **unique** book to help make patients aware of **major, yet little known problems in health care** which jeopardize their ability to get the care they need and deserve. We give them **strategies** to improve their chances of getting care that is most right for them and to avoid harms.

We are interested in talking with people who might wish to **partner with us to make this information available to both patients and providers of care.**

#### Why This Book Is Unique

We are in a huge **health care misinformation crisis**. It is well-documented, tragic, yet little known, and it has caused enormous **waste** and a multitude of **harms** including thousands of **preventable deaths**. This crisis is due to a **failure to educate** health care professionals in what is required for **trustable and useful information** to inform decisions about **medical interventions**. Patients *and* care providers deserve better.

**Our Goal** is to help patients make truly informed health care choices.

We focus on building patient **awareness, preparedness and participation** in making health care decisions that are most right for the individual.

#### Awareness

- Reliable and useful medical science should be the foundation for health care—but much medical science actually is **not trustable**, and many physicians **do not know this**.
- Further, doctors and other health care professionals frequently **do not understand how to evaluate and use medical science**.
- To make matters worse, research says that **physician communications with patients often fall short** in important ways.

#### The Big Health Care Misinformation Mess

1. There is a high likelihood that your doctor or other health professional is **not giving you** information based on reliable science.
2. There is a high likelihood **they do not know this**
3. There is a high likelihood that they are **not giving you sufficient information** to inform your decisions

To help patients deal with these problems, we give them **unique insights** into doctors, health care systems and the challenges of being a patient. We pull back the curtain on—

- **Secrets and challenges of being a doctor** that can affect patients' health care choices.
- **Health care as a business** and why this puts patients at risk.
- Why some medical research may sound impressive, but **not actually help patients**.
- Challenges of being a patient (and what patients can do to help **change the course of their health care**).



## Preparedness & Participation

We tell patients **what to be on the alert for** and **strategies for overcoming these issues**. We prepare patients for their health care encounters by answering the following questions—

- What is **patient-centered care**?
- What does an **ideal patient-encounter** look like?
- **What kinds of information** should patients get + how should it come to them?
- What are some **red flags** that should signal patients that something is not going well?
- What are some **basic essentials for sound and useful medical science**—in **simple terms** patients can understand.

We provide **engaging case histories** and **examples** along with **tools** and details of **strategies** patients can use as patterns for health care communications and decision-making. Without this information, these skills and the tools we provide, patients are **at risk for suboptimal decisions and outcomes**.

We equip patients with ideas to **effectively react, respond and address problems in the areas of communications, information and decision-making**. In this book, we give patients—

- Information, ideas, strategies and key questions to ask to **help patients prepare to participate** in each health care encounter.
- Insights into various **decision-making choices** to help patients pick a pathway that is most comfortable for them to make care decisions.
- **Suggestions, tips and even scripts** to help patients utilize effective communications skills, including **what to do when they are not happy with the course of their care**.

**This book** is a **resource** patients can use in their **lifelong and unique journeys** through the world of health care.

## More Information



**References** and more about the health care misinformation mess are available at [www.delfini.org](http://www.delfini.org)

**Read more about the book** at [www.delfinigrouppublishing.com](http://www.delfinigrouppublishing.com) which also includes **testimonials** + a link to freely available **patient resources** or see [http://www.delfinigrouppublishing.com/patients\\_book.htm](http://www.delfinigrouppublishing.com/patients_book.htm)

**Contact** Sheri + Mike at [delfini@delfini.org](mailto:delfini@delfini.org)