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The Patient's Playbook: How To Save Your Life And The Lives Of Those You Love



Synopsis

Too many Americans die each year as a result of preventable medical errors—mistakes, complications, and misdiagnoses. And many more of us are not receiving the best care possible, even though it's readily available and we're entitled to it. The key is knowing how to access it. The Patient's Playbook is a call to action. It will change the way you manage your health and the health of your family, and it will show you how to choose the right doctor, coordinate the best care, and get to the No-Mistake Zone in medical decision making. Leslie D. Michelson has devoted his life's work to helping people achieve superior medical outcomes at every stage of their lives. Michelson presents real-life stories that impart lessons and illuminate his easy-to-follow strategies for navigating complex situations and cases. The Patient's Playbook is an essential guide to the most effective techniques for getting the best from a broken system: sourcing excellent physicians, selecting the right treatment protocols, researching with precision, and structuring the ideal support team. Along the way you will learn: Why having the right primary care physician will change your life Three things you can do right now to be better prepared when illness strikes The ten must-ask questions at the end of a hospital stay How to protect yourself from unnecessary and dangerous treatments Ways to avoid the four most common mistakes in the first twenty-four hours of a medical emergency This book will enable you to become a smarter health care consumer—and to replace anxiety with confidence.

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Customer Reviews

Michelson, an attorney, has written an interesting and lively book about accessing the best care in the US health care system. The foundation of the book is a series of stories of people he has helped access care and accurate diagnosis. It is one success story after another and that certainly builds the reader's confidence in Michelson as a health system ombudsman. He goes on to advise, with the examples he has provided, on how to get the best competent care for yourself and those you love. I liked the book a lot and feel that it is a good primer for anyone approaching the US system with a serious illness. Many of Michelson's examples are people with unusual conditions or hard to diagnose illnesses. I've been an RN for 30 years and his stories were probably more transparent to me than to the lay reader. Mistakes happen all the time and some conditions (especially auto-immune) are often frustrating to get properly diagnosed and treated. I was appalled by the example of the patient with psoriatic arthritis who was not diagnosed by her dermatologist. It was evident to me at the beginning of her case study. Michelson has a glib "follow me, boys!" aura to his writing that is a tiny bit showman. Most people do not have a health policy lawyer to compile their health binder and take it to the Mayo for them. I think his connections to the superstars in medicine remove him a bit from day to day medicine experiences for the rest of us. I also think he misses one huge aspect of the health care system; the large number of people who think they have an exotic disease and do not want to hear they have plain old hypertension or diabetes. Not everyone has a rare disease. There is a reason for the old saying that when "you hear hoofbeats, think horses, not zebras". Most people can get a lot of good solid advice from this book. I'd caution people to understand the waters of the real medical system do not part as easily for regular folks as they do for Michelson. I'd also ask that in an effort to be health care assertive, people not yell, scream and throw things at their health care workers (yes, that happens). The reality is that people do die, every one of us and no matter how assertive/aggressive you are, some outcomes are inevitable. With that caveat, I liked the book and think it can be valuable for those lost in the confusion of illness and treatment.

This book is a gem. Michelson specializes in helping people get good medical care in serious or challenging illness, but his advice and strategies make sense for routine medical care as well. Many patients are so used to doing what the doctor says that they don't take charge of their own care -and thus get overtreated, ignored, or otherwise get less than the best outcome and care. Michelson blends personal and individual stories with an excellent set of steps and strategies for getting the best care. Speaking up for yourself, selecting a good doctor, coordinating your care, doing research that your doctor might not have time to do, being a collaborator with the doctor and an advocate for

yourself, and so on. And having someone else as your quarterback, the person who coordinates things and advocates for you. And, perhaps most important, ways to make yourself seem like a person rather than a case when you're in the hospital. Much of what Michelson recommends is essentially assertiveness, and he includes what amount to scripts for handling potentially awkward conversations with medical people. So - practical information, inspiration, and personal stories that illustrate and inspire. If you are facing a health crisis or serious chronic condition in yourself or in someone close to you, read this book and put the steps and actions into practice. It really could save your life.

Most of us are aware of the growing crisis in our healthcare system, but might not understand the breadth of this nor how to navigate the broken system when we need healthcare. This is such a wonderful book to learn about both. I'm not usually a fan of books that are full of anecdotes, but in this book each one is used to provide a very clear example that is anchored in the experience of the author, and many are backed up with references or resources. The book unfolds through three parts (each with multiple chapters) that give advice on how to select and work with your primary care physician, how to escalate to an expert and deal with an emergency, and how to cope with a serious illness. The end of each chapter has a nice summary of the points in that chapter to recap.) A constant message throughout is that you should be an informed consumer of your medical care, that you should keep track of your own (and family members) medical history, and that you need to advocate for yourself and inform yourself. Since we all need medical care even in the broken system, this is a book for all of us.

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