

Poor service, bedside manner top patients' online complaints

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Photo: U.S. National Institutes of Health

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Researchers reviewed the Yelp, Vitals, and RateMDs websites to find the most common complaints patients have about their physicians. Over 3,500 online reviews of 300 physicians ([internists](#) and obstetrician-gynecologists) in Denver, New York City, San Diego, and Austin, Texas, were assessed.

The researchers found that 53 percent of the online reviews gave physicians no greater than two stars out of a possible four or five stars. The top complaints lodged by patients were poor bedside manner/doctor indifference (43.1 percent); poor customer service (35.3 percent); and inadequate [medical skills](#) (21.5 percent), including false diagnoses and surgical mistakes.

One complaint regarding poor bedside manner and doctor indifference read: "Dr. Y glanced at my [breast lump](#) and quickly gave me a diagnosis of 'cyst' because I was too young to have anything else. He didn't even do an [ultrasound](#)! Well, it turns out my 'cyst' was cancer." Another comment, summing up a common theme on customer service, read: "Not a nice office. Doctor himself is very nice. Would be better if he surrounded himself with better staff."

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