

Argus Orthopaedic Zone

What Does “The Art of Medicine” Mean?

By Thomas J. Haverbush, M.D.
Orthopaedic Surgeon

Transforming patient information into patient understanding.

Come on now, be honest. We have all heard and used the phrase “The Art of Medicine”. Do you know what it means? Really?

First, however, we have to consider science and technology. These are the politicians’ favorite words concerning medicine. Should we standardize medicine? Streamline it and make it cheaper? Be like Wal-Mart? I’d be in the Orthopaedic Surgery section, known as the hardware section!

The system could be streamlined so patients go through like cars on an assembly line. That would be the most efficient. The problem is we are not all alike.

There is too much individuality in patients. Patients respond to disease differently. Oh yes, patients respond to treatment differently, I have noticed. Do they ever. One patient who I do a total knee replacement on is up and walking with a walker or crutches the next day. The next patient limps and hurts for weeks or longer. Why? I did the same surgery. Why are the outcomes so different?

Art Is More Than Pretty Pictures

The “Art of Medicine” is many things. I must sort through Orthopaedic’s incredible mass of information and apply it to my individual practice. Each surgeon brings a unique set of skills to his or her patient. I must listen to each patient’s history with concern and render the best treatment available.

Part of the “art” is recognizing that all people are not the same; different patients respond to the same disease or injury in vastly different ways.

Recognizing the individuality of the disease or injury is a key component of the “art” of medicine. I do recognize this.

I also understand that my work affects the patient’s very existence. It affects the patient’s ability to function and hopefully live without pain.

Our goal is simple – To help people return to more pain free, functional lives.

Health Care Is Personal

I have to bridge the gap between what patients know and what I know and what I am able to do for them. Without that key role the results may be very different.

I have to give the patient the faith necessary to benefit from the application of the science.

I have to encourage patients to be active in their own care. A non compliant patient = an unsuccessful outcome.

Science and Technology alone can’t deliver the kind of health care we need.

Office Website and Argus Orthopaedic Zone Archive

Thank you loyal readers for joining us each week. Do yourself a favor and log onto www.orthopodsurgeon.com.

It contains a world of musculoskeletal information you and your family and friends can use! Website, Your Orthopaedic Connection, Archive of all previous Argus articles.

Please check it out. Be well.

Dr. Haverbush

