

Summary and Conclusions

Dermatoethics is an important study because the literature dealing with medical ethics is meager .

This study included 100 dermatologists (23 males and 77 females) . Their ages ranged from 25-60 years . The method used was a self filling questionnaire , the questionnaire included questions in many aspects in doctor – patient relationship .

Finally we found that whatever the variation in the opinions of dermatologists , they do the best for patients e.g.

- Most dermatologists agreed to exclude the poor patient from the payment of fees .
- Most dermatologists agreed to give a priority to a colleague among the patients .
- Most dermatologists refused to take fees from a colleague .
- Most dermatologists disagreed to write non deserving medical certificates for the payment of fees .
- Most dermatologists disagreed to tell the patient that his previous doctor was a cheater .
- Most dermatologists agreed to ask the permission of the patient before examination in front of medical students .

In conclusion, the present study suggests the following guidelines for patient-dermatologist relationship .

A- Socio economic aspects :

- 1- Dermatologists should exclude the poor patient from the payment of fees .
- 2- Dermatologists should request necessary investigations only and they should not guide the patient to a specific laboratory.
- 3- Dermatologists should not examine a patient with a disease not related to their specialty .
- 4- Dermatologists should not prescribe an expensive drug to satisfy a wealthy patient in spite of the availability of a cheaper and effective drug .
- 5- If the dermatologist examines a colleague , he should give him the priority and he should refuse to take fees from him .
- 6- Dermatologists should refuse to write medical certificates only because he was paid his fees .

B- Diagnostic Aspects :

- 1- Dermatologists should tell the patient (even in an indirect way) that he did not reach the diagnosis , he should tell the patient that taking a biopsy may confirm the diagnosis .
- 2- Dermatologists should consult an experienced colleague if they did not reach the diagnosis .

- 3- Dermatologists should tell the patient the whole truth about his disease by using indirect words .
- 4- Dermatologists should inform the patient's relatives about the disease that the patient is suffering from .
- 5- Dermatologists should not tell the patient that his previous doctor was a cheater .

C- Behavior during examination :

- 1- Dermatologists should not discriminate between patients according to their socioeconomic standard or religion .
- 2- If the disease affects the genitalia or other sensitive areas and the patient is refusing to have this area exposed , the dermatologist should apologize to the patient and repay the fees to him .
- 3- Dermatologists should examine all parts of patient's body even if he did not have a complaint in these parts .
- 4- If the patient said that someone else suffers from a disease and asks the dermatologist to prescribe the treatment , the dermatologist should refuse to do that .
- 5- If the patient is talkative , the dermatologist should end the dialogue without embarrassing him .
- 6- Dermatologists should not examine the patient in presence of his companions . But the dermatologist should have a nurse during examination .

- 7- Maintaining clear professional boundaries is an important step to prevent harassment in doctor-patient relationship .
- 8- Dermatologists should ask the permission of the patient before examination in front of medical students .

D- Therapeutic aspects:

- 1- Dermatologists should not prescribe the drug according to patients wishes e.g. if the case needs topical treatment only and the patient insists to receive systemic treatment .
- 2- Dermatologists should not prescribe a specific drug to get benefits from a pharmaceutical company or direct the patient to a specific pharmacy to gain financial benefit .
- 3- Dermatologists may request drug samples from medical representatives of pharmaceutical companies and give them to patients and may use some of them for their personal use .