Dear Patients: Thank You

Maria Yang, MD

Dear Patient(s),

Thank you for educating me.

Thank you for letting me shine bright lights into your eyes and place Q-tips up your nose. Thank you for not shooting me a dirty look when I ask you to lift up your pendulous breast so I can listen to your heart. Thank you for letting me ogle at your protuberant belly—whether it contains a baby, a liver tumor, or liters of fluid inside.

Thank you for not experiencing an erection and for refraining from snide remarks when I examine your penis. Thank you for telling me that my speculum use is suboptimal and has caused you pain during your pelvic exam. Thank you for nearly kicking me in the face when I tap on your knees to test your reflexes. Thank you for peeing all over me after I remove your diaper.

Thank you for answering questions that, in any other context, are completely obnoxious and rude. Thank you for being honest with me when I ask if you are a prostitute, an IV drug user, or an alcoholic. Thank you for not assaulting me when I ask if you have sex with “men, women, or both”. Thank you for answering questions about hearing loss when you’re actually concerned about your chest pain. Thank you for not yelling at me in impatience when your back pain is “a ten out of ten”.

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