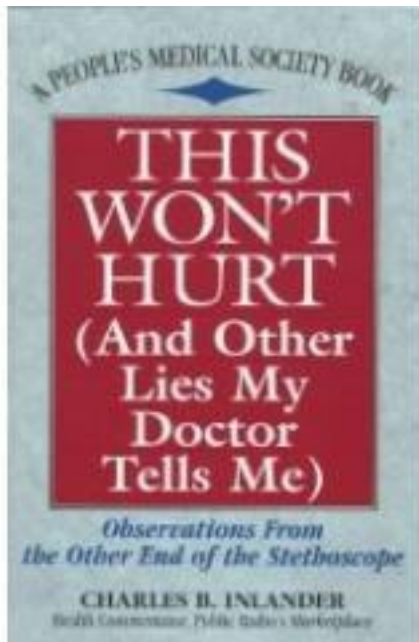


This Won't Hurt (And Other Lies My Doctor Tells Me): Observations from the Other End of the Stethoscope



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I was a kid growing up in Chicago, I hated going to the doctor. My pediatrician was a nice enough man. He always seemed kind, and he would always tell me jokes. I didn't mind his office, either. The receptionist was very friendly. There were plenty of magazines for kids lying around. And there were even some toys to tinker with while I waited. But the one thing that really bothered me about him was that he lied. And the worst part about his lying was that he thought he was doing it for my own good. I know he lied to all my friends, as well. When I told them about the lies he told me, they would

say he told them the same thing. As a result, I developed a great mistrust of doctors. Of course, the biggest lie he told was when he would say, "This won't hurt, Charles!" and then proceed to give me a painful shot. He joked that he practiced his shots on grape-fruits--he even had a hypodermic needle sticking out of a wooden replica of a grapefruit on his desk. But he only chuckled when I reminded him that wooden things had no feelings. Granted, shots are not all that painful, but most kids think they are. And when a doctor tries to ease a child into one by saying it won't hurt--and the child knows other-wise--well, it's not hard to figure out why a kid might hate going to the doctor. Over the years, doctors have lied to me repeatedly. Some-

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目录:

[This Won't Hurt \(And Other Lies My Doctor Tells Me\): Observations from the Other End of the Stethoscope 下载链接1](#)

标签

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