

# Match Made in Medicine:

## A Peek into America's Doctor-Patient Relationships

In the season of coupling up, we break down one of the most important relationships of all: the bond between patients and their doctors. We've uncovered what matters most in a medical match, the importance of these long-term ties and the secret to keeping a strong doctor-patient relationship.



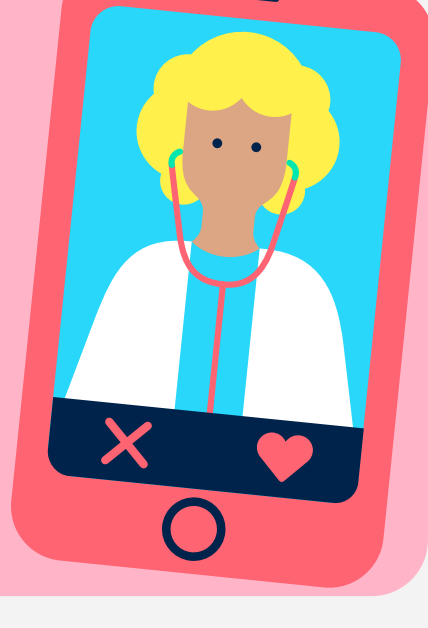
## Swiping Right on MDs

The traits people value in their doctors aren't so different from the kind they seek in a significant other.

### Doctors vs. dates: top-rated traits

#### Doctors

1. Good education, 80%
2. Asks good questions, 79%
3. Trustworthy, 77%
4. Good listener, 74%
5. Close to where I live/work, 70%



#### Dates

1. Sense of humor, 84%
2. Trustworthy, 80%
3. Good listener, 80%
4. Appearance, 71%
5. Well-liked by others, 60%



### These traits aren't reserved just for dates

#### Appearance

More than 1 in 4 (26%) say a doctor's appearance is important.



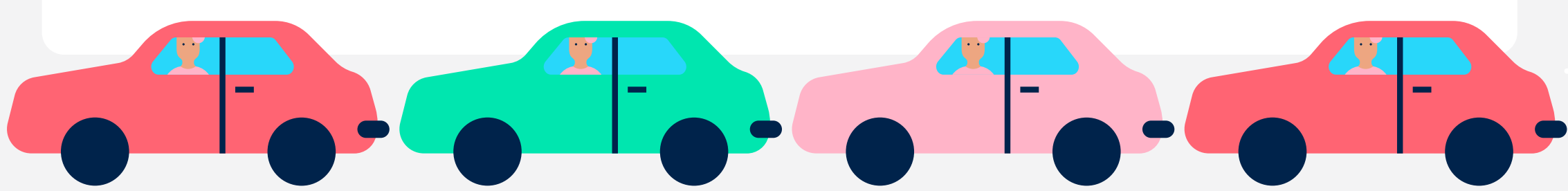
#### Sense of Humor

More than 2 in 5 (43%) want a doctor who can make them laugh.



### Find a keeper, travel the distance

**68%** of Americans would be more willing to travel farther for a great doctor than for a great date.



## First Impressions

For patients, the initial doctor's visit really matters.

### First appointments vs. first dates

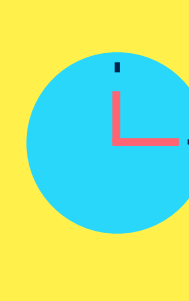
Here are the qualities more Americans prioritize in a doctor, than a date, the first time they meet:



**Asks good questions**



**Listens carefully**



**Arrives on time**

### Some factors are essential for doctors and dates



**45%** value smiling and eye contact in a doctor.

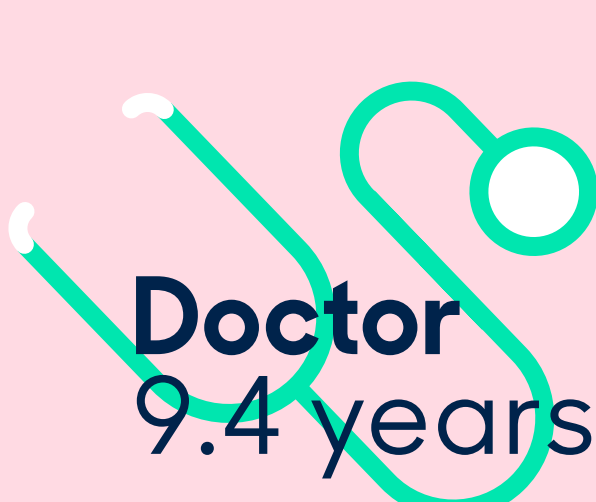
**77%** believe good hygiene is crucial.

## Medical Monogamy

Americans seek doctor relationships that last, trust the ones they know, and spill the beans to only the ones they trust.

### Average length of relationships\*

Doctor-patient relationships last a long time, behind only that of significant others.



**Doctor**  
9.4 years

**Significant other**  
18.3 years

**Hairstylist**  
7.4 years

**Personal trainer**  
1.5 years

**Barista**  
1.9 years

\*among those who have had an ongoing relationship

### Long-term patients are more open patients



4 out of 5 people are likelier to take advice from a doctor they know and love than one they just met.



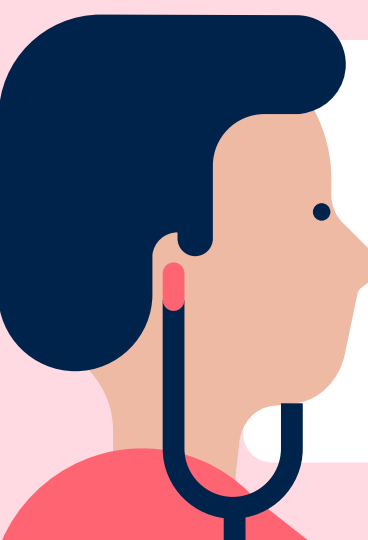
More Americans feel comfortable discussing:

**mental health**  
**embarrassing symptoms**  
**family history**

with a longtime doctor than with a new one.

**82%** of Americans have had an ongoing relationship with a doctor.

### Let's talk about sex, MD



More Americans are comfortable discussing their sexual health with a **longtime doctor** (67%) than with a **longtime romantic partner** (57%).



## Doctor Deal Breakers

Americans aren't afraid to break up with their doctors, and second chances don't come easily.

### Maintaining a medical match is tough

**7 in 10** would stop seeing both a doctor and significant other they didn't trust.



**41%** think maintaining a long-term relationship with a doctor is more difficult than with a romantic partner.

### Give me another chance—I'll change



**72%** would be more willing to give a second chance to a date than a doctor.



## Tips from Dr. Valentine

Yes, Dr. Meghan Valentine is a real doctor—a practicing ob-gyn in D.C. with lots of patients who love her (she's got a 5-star Zocdoc rating). These are her strategies for a lasting doctor-patient relationship.

**1**

Form a relationship built on mutual trust and respect.

**2**

Don't be afraid to voice your questions and concerns.

**3**

Be an active partner—great care comes from working together.



Brought to you by the medical matchmakers at Zocdoc, digitally pairing doctors and patients since 2007.

Survey methodology: The Zocdoc Doctor-Patient Relationship Survey was conducted between January 5th and January 8th, 2017 as an online survey of 1,025 nationally representative Americans ages 18 and over, with a margin of error of +/- 3.2%.

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