



New Medical Report Warns Against Shaking Hands With Your Doctor

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What's more dangerous to your health—shaking hands with your doctor, or smoking in public?

Give up? They're both bad for your health!

That's the troubling conclusion in a new medical report which is advising doctors to stop shaking hands with their patients.

INSIDE EDITION's Diane McInerney spoke with with Dr. Richard Besser, Chief Health and Medical Editor for ABC News, and asked, "How dangerous is a handshake?"

Dr. Besser said, "You have to think about what doctors and health care providers are doing in the hospital. They're constantly touching people who may be harboring very dangerous germs. That's a scary thing."

New York plastic surgeon Dr. Michelle Yagoda does shake hands with her patients, but she takes extreme precautions.

Dr. Yagoda, "It's very important that if you're going to be shaking hands with a physician, that you make sure that your physician washes his or her hands, before and after."

Comedian Howie Mandel has famously avoided shaking hands for years, opting instead for the fist bump.

But politicians like New Jersey Governor Chris Christie and South Carolina Governor Nikki Haley say the new medical report won't change their glad-handing ways.

Haley said, "Hand sanitizer is my friend."

Christie said, "I think all of us understand there are certain occupational hazards in our jobs. I don't think any of us will see ourselves stop shaking hands with folks any time soon."

When a fragile Robin Roberts returned to work after her bone marrow transplant, she greeted McInerney with an elbow bump, on the advice of her doctors.

Dr. Besser approves, saying, "You're not touching any surface that can cause a problem." And he suggests we seriously consider changing the way we greet people with these alternatives.

"A fist bump, you spread a few germs, but not many. In some cultures, people bow. In others, they do a namaste," said Dr. Besser. "Those are all things where you're not touching, but you're showing some respect, a sign of friendship."

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