

Medical Ethics



Medical Ethics are a system of moral principles or rules of behaviour that control or influence on the professional duty of a Doctor. Hippocrates (460-360 BC) had formulated the professional and social duties for ' Doctor' all

over the world. In this 'Oath' he had categorically told " I will fulfill according to my ability and judgement".

Further he added on private practice & public service so do not fix your attention on what your fees is to be. A wrong of this nature is likely to harm the patient particularly if the disease be an acute one. Hold first to reputation than profit.

The ethical issues for Doctor are various but some knowledge in day to day clinical practice is essential. Before examining the patient he or she should be asked about their ailments and after a patience hearing only the confidence can be gained. Very often patients become anxious to know about the diagnosis and prognosis of the disease but it should not be disclosed immediately e.g. in diseases like Malignancy or HIV. The same is to be informed to the near and dear of the relatives only.

The Doctor is to see the best interest of the patients. But very often patient refuses the advice of the physician or surgeon. For example a case of "Myocardial Infarction", or a "Strangulated Hernia" case will refuse for hospitalisation. In that case a third person may act to persuade the patient and even if that attempts fail the refusal to be noted on the prescription in presence of witness.

Before treatment patient is to be given a clear picture regarding the nature of treatment specially in surgical practice whether it is palliative or radical in some cases conservative if the condition permits. The patient choice is to be also considered provided it is not life threatening.

Minimum and essential investigations are to be advised specially in patients who are eco-

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nomically not sound. While prescribing drugs specially Diabetes (Type-II), Hypertension etc. there should be limitations. Patients should not be tasked with placeboes than the main drugs. It is always observed how much the patients can afford because he will have to take the drug life long. The rule of thumb is "see the pulse of the patient while seeing the pulse". So that the treatment is ensured completely.

Never criticise the prescription or advice of a Doctor of own profession before the patient. If any mistake is found by a junior he should be called to the chamber & if with the senior then junior should go and discuss with regards so that both of them will be benefited. In Medical Science nobody is perfect, as every body knows that it is ever changing. The drugs, which were genuine yesterday, are obsolete today.

A Doctor is to treat a 'foe' or a friend irrespective of caste, creed or religion. In the war even the wounded shoulders of enemy side are being treated in Military hospitals in the same way as their own shoulders. In the days of 'Tretaya Yug' in 'Ramayan' it has been described.

During the war between Ramchandra & Ravan, Laxman was unconscious by the arrow (Shakti) of Indrajeet. Then Susena (Vaidya) of Ravan was called and he treated Laxman who advised for ' Bisalya Karani' & Laxman was cured.

Then this information reached to Ravan & Susena was summoned to the Darwar of Ravan, where Susena clearly told "Laxman was a patient and I have treated him as I am "Vaidya" disciple of "Dhanmantari". As Ravan was a King of Wisdom, he pardoned Susena. From this it is quite clear that how in ancient India also the medical ethics were followed.

Hence it is told – The patients – In illness – The physician is father, In convalescence – 'Friend' & when cured from disease – 'Guardian'