

Investigation 1.1

Worksheet 1.1B

Dr. _____

P. ____ Date: _____

Types of Physicians: Referrals

Since human minds find the human body quite complex, a single doctor cannot possibly treat every type of medical problem. Physicians routinely call on other doctors to help them when they feel that doctor can do a better job of solving the problem for the patient. When this happens it is called **referring** the patient.

In this activity **YOU** are the Family Practitioner. When patients come to you with problems you can easily solve, you take care of the patient yourself. But when you cannot confidently make a diagnosis on your patient's complaints you would refer that patient to another physician who has more experience with that type of problem.

What does it mean to "refer" the patient?

In each situation below, to which physician would you most likely refer the patient?

1. A 45 year old male patient complains of ringing in their ears which has been present on and off for two months. You find no obvious reason for this, so you decide to refer the patient to a specialist. To which specialist would you probably send this patient?

Patient 1: _____

2. An 87 year old female is brought to you by her daughter because she goes for walks and get lost in her own neighborhood. She likes to drive her car but has trouble remembering where she parked it. The elderly lady constantly asks you the same question over and over. To which specialist would you probably refer this patient?

Patient 2: _____

3. The mother of a thirteen year old boy brings him into your office. She tells you her son fell off his skateboard while doing ramp jumping in the back yard. She believes he injured his left arm. You look at the arm and find the arm has swollen and the boy reports it feels very tender to the touch. You order an x-ray, which shows a break in the radius bone of the lower arm.

- a. Which bone do we call the radius? LARGER or SMALLER bone of the forearm (Circle the correct answer)
- b. To which doctor would you refer this patient for further evaluation and treatment?

Patient 3: _____

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4. A 57 year old man comes to you because he is concerned that he occasionally feels light headed and gets dizzy. He cannot tell you any particular activity that causes this to happen. When you listen to his heart you hear an irregular heart beat and an abnormal sloshing sound between the normal beats of the heart.

To which physician specialist might you consider referring this patient?

Patient 4: _____

5. A 21 year old female comes to your office complaining she always feels weak and tired. She says she sometimes sees black spots in her field of vision and occasionally experiences difficulty keeping her balance. You take a blood sample and look at it under the microscope. You find an abnormally low number of red blood cells.

- a. What important substance do red blood cells carry?

- b. To which specialist would you probably refer this patient?

Patient 5: _____

6. A 35 year old female comes to you complaining of pain and numbness starting in her right hip and shooting down her right leg. Lifting heavy objects makes the pain worse and the pain has been growing progressively worse over the past several months. On examination you find the patient cannot feel sharpness on the skin of the right leg when touched with a sharp probe and cannot feel the difference between a warm and cold wet gauze when applied to the right leg.

To which physician would you refer this patient?

Patient 6: _____

7. A Mother brings in a nine year old girl after her pet cat scratched the girl's face. The mother is concerned the child might catch cat scratch fever. When you examine the wound you see a deep cut on the right cheek below the eye that goes deep enough to require stitches. You write a prescription for an antibiotic to protect the child from cat scratch fever, but you decide to refer the girl to a specialist for her stitches because very small, careful stitches may prevent her from developing a noticeable scar on her face.

Who would you refer this patient to for facial stitches?

Patient 7: _____