

A Real Story

Patient: Simon, could you check my blood pressure?

Simon: Sure.....(*taking blood pressure*). Whoa- that's crazy- what happened today that your pressure is so high?

Patient: Funny you asked what happened today. That's why I came here. I knew you would ask me that. This morning was my annual physical with my M.D. but before I went for my appointment I went to my store and found out it had been broken into and a large amount of money I had hidden was gone. I figured there was nothing I could do about it so I went for my appointment. The minute my doctor saw my pressure was up he prescribed medication, declaring "I was waiting for this to happen- every black patient I have eventually has high blood pressure." Without asking questions he tore off the prescription, handed it to me and walked out of the room. I knew if I came here you would immediately ask me what was up- and I know what's coming next!

Simon: Right- throw that prescription in the trash (*subdued language used for written version*) and we'll check your pressure on a better day!

Knowing a patient's lifestyle and history is an important part of my care. In this case the patient was a super-fit man in his fifties, extremely active with excellent dietary habits. There was no way he could be categorized (as no one should be) without careful evaluation of history, habits and circumstances. Put that on your prescription pad!