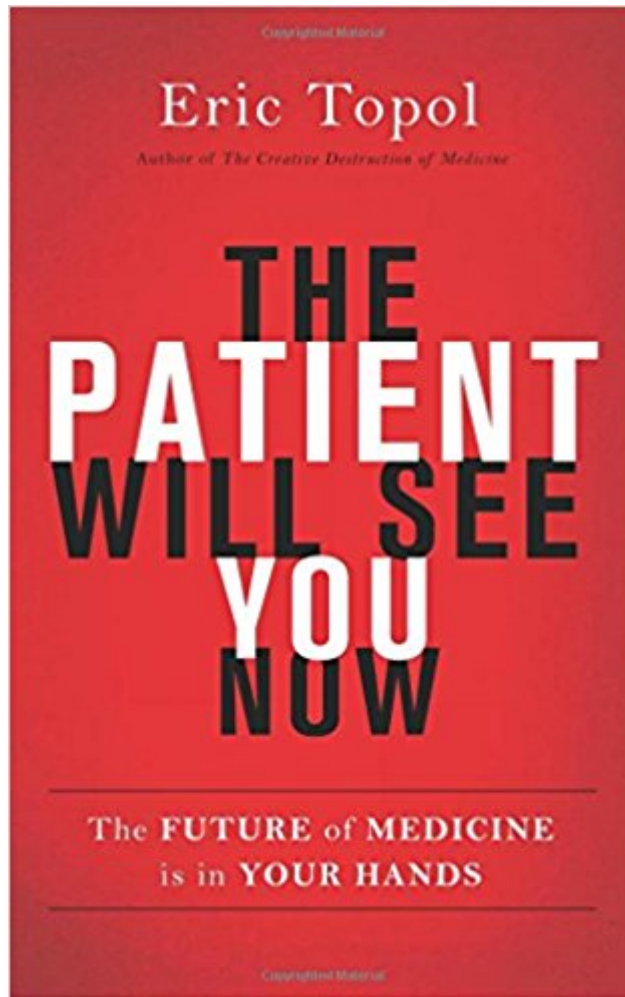


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# The Patient Will See You Now: The Future Of Medicine Is In Your Hands



## Synopsis

A trip to the doctor is almost a guarantee of misery. You'll make an appointment months in advance. You'll probably wait for several hours until you hear "the doctor will see you now"—but only for fifteen minutes! Then you'll wait even longer for lab tests, the results of which you'll likely never see, unless they indicate further (and more invasive) tests, most of which will probably prove unnecessary (much like physicals themselves). And your bill will be astronomical. In *The Patient Will See You Now*, Eric Topol, one of the nation's top physicians, shows why medicine does not have to be that way. Instead, you could use your smartphone to get rapid test results from one drop of blood, monitor your vital signs both day and night, and use an artificially intelligent algorithm to receive a diagnosis without having to see a doctor, all at a small fraction of the cost imposed by our modern healthcare system. The change is powered by what Topol calls medicine's "Gutenberg moment." Much as the printing press took learning out of the hands of a priestly class, the mobile internet is doing the same for medicine, giving us unprecedented control over our healthcare. With smartphones in hand, we are no longer beholden to an impersonal and paternalistic system in which "doctor knows best." Medicine has been digitized, Topol argues; now it will be democratized. Computers will replace physicians for many diagnostic tasks, citizen science will give rise to citizen medicine, and enormous data sets will give us new means to attack conditions that have long been incurable. Massive, open, online medicine, where diagnostics are done by Facebook-like comparisons of medical profiles, will enable real-time, real-world research on massive populations. There's no doubt the path forward will be complicated: the medical establishment will resist these changes, and digitized medicine inevitably raises serious issues surrounding privacy. Nevertheless, the result—better, cheaper, and more human health care—will be worth it. Provocative and engrossing, *The Patient Will See You Now* is essential reading for anyone who thinks they deserve better health care. That is, for all of us.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Topol's earlier book - *The Creative Destruction of Medicine: How the Digital Revolution Will Create Better Health Care* discussed quantified-self, and aspects of the app-centric health data logging and analyses and concluded that mHealth will form the basis of healthcare disruption. In this book, Topol provides a very interesting thought framework to deduce "what's next?" The first section expands his assertion that paternalistic healthcare systems (personified by FDA, AMA, and traditionalists) is really behind the times and the notion "nothing about me without me" is increasingly becoming not only feasible but also demanded by the patients. Providing a detour explaining the evolution of interpretations of the Hippocrates oath, Topol uses that opportunity to take issue (yet again) with the AMA and the entire practice around guidelines. While arguing for increased access for patient-related information to the patients, Topol clearly acknowledges the difference in information and knowledge gaps and points out that mere access is not sufficient, but it is a critical step in rethinking patient engagement and direct participation. To further expand on these themes, Topol borrows Eisentien's characterization of printing press as a change agent and draws significant parallels with that transformation and smartphones, calling this the "Gutenberg moment".

Dr. Topol does a terrific job of laying out the immense potential of smartphones and iMedicine technologies to democratize medicine like never before. He likens the smartphone's potential to being the "Gutenberg Press" of medicine. Having seen these emerging technologies in action, this isn't hyperbole. His writing style makes it very accessible for the lay person without any "dumbing down" that would be a turnoff to health professionals. This is a must read for anyone that cares about healthcare. Dr. Topol mixes in the promise of emerging technologies and approaches with a sobering assessment of where the present healthcare system isn't reaching its full potential. The book is very well sourced so one can easily find data that backs his assertions. The following are some choice quotes from the book that give you a small taste of what you are in for when you read Topol's book: "An ECG was emailed to me by a patient with the subject line 'I'm in atrial fib, now what do I do?', I knew the world had changed." "We've never seen

such a discrete challenge to the medical profession, but weâ™ve not had the platform or landscape for that to be accomplished. Until now.\*Increasing frustration and vexing aspects of health care today may influence a bottoms up movement, propelled by smartphones and social networks for improving the future of medicine\*Health care consumers are truly the Rodney Dangerfields of medicine: âœl donâ™t get no respect.â •Three Labradors and two Portuguese water dogs made the diagnosis of lung cancer with 99% accuracy! Similarly, dogs were able to detect prostate cancer via urine samples with 98% accuracy.

Dr. Topol's overriding thesis is that the 'doctor knows best' days are gone - 'eminence-guided' medicine is being replaced by 'evidence-guided' medicine. Further, no more waiting an hour for one's appointment (7 minutes average time for existing patients, 12 minutes for new patients) - a rapidly increasing number of ailments and concerns can be handled by one's smart-phone. The really good news is that Dr. Topol is in full support of these trends - he recognizes that American medicine is the world's most fallible, inefficient enterprise. Smartphones already can take blood-pressure reading, do an electrocardiogram (ECG) using apps approved by the FDA and validated in many clinical studies, attaching wearable wireless sensors allows measuring blood-oxygen and glucose levels, another attachment allows eardrum exams in the case of suspected ear infection. You can now get a video consultation with a doctor via smartphone at the same cost (\$30 - \$40) as the typical copay charge for employer health plans. Deloitte Price Waterhouse Cooper contends that as many as one in six doctor visits were virtual in 2014 and that this will soon become the norm. Dr. Topol touts G.E.'s Vscan introduced in 2010, a portable ultrasound about the size of a book, with a wand connected by a wire. As part of a routine physical exam it gives him a view of the valves, chamber, etc, takes 1-2 minutes, costs about \$8,000, and provides image resolution equal that of a \$300,000 machine. The alternative is an \$800 charge for sending someone to the echo lab where they do a 45-minute study. (Could reduce the \$100 billion/year spent on ultrasound at least 50%.) But, cardiologists don't get reimbursed for doing this --> 20 million echocardiograms/year.

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