**Diagnostic Error**

**AN EPIDEMIC IGNORED**

A Physician’s Typical Day

Each patient is different

- 9:10AM rash
- 10:05AM fainting spells
- 11:10AM chest pain
- 11:10AM breathing difficulty
- 10:50AM heartburn
- 11:10AM burn
- 1:15PM breathing difficulty
- 2:10PM heartburn
- 2:10PM flank pain
- 2:15PM back pain
- 2:35PM vomiting
- 3:00PM depression
- 3:00PM diarrhea
- 3:25PM sore throat
- 3:50PM diarrhea
- 4:20PM arm pain
- 4:30PM flank pain
- 4:50PM fever
- 5:10PM anxiety
- 5:30PM dizziness
- 9:40AM cough
- 10:35AM headache
- 11:40AM burn
- 1:45PM back pain
- 2:35PM vomiting
- 3:25PM sore throat
- 4:20PM arm pain
- 5:10PM anxiety

**ERROR**

- Diagnosed benign positional vertigo, missed cerebellar stroke

**Premature Closure:** Diagnosis was first to come to mind, did not consider other possible diagnoses and failed to take a detailed patient history.

**Anchoring Error:** Locked in on a diagnosis based on initial symptoms and failed to adjust.

**5%** of diagnoses are in **ERROR**, translating to **62 diagnostic errors** per physician per year...

**18 MILLION PRIMARY CARE DIAGNOSTIC ERRORS PER YEAR IN THE UNITED STATES**

- **20** Average number of patient visits per day
- **34%** Percentage of visits involving a diagnostic question

Physicians can memorize the most serious and most common diseases to speed care and spot emergencies. Complexity, variation and the sheer volume of patients makes it impossible to handle every patient from memory.

**Complexity. Ambiguity. Variation.**

“Nearly every person will experience a **diagnostic error** in their lifetime”

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