

Orthopaedic Connection

Myth Busters I

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I hope you are wondering about this curious title. It is a departure from what I usually write. It was suggested to me recently that I occasionally write an article to combat misinformation and perhaps demystify certain topics.

- **M B**

"Dr. Haverbush doesn't write these articles himself."

I thought I would begin with this as the first M B because I think it is very important. Hopefully it is being said because "he is too busy" to write them rather than he is incapable of writing the articles himself.

Every word you have read here and every word on my website articles is written by me alone. I must have known that all those English classes in college would be helpful! They have been.

I take the time to write. I am very busy of course, but I want people to learn and I am using my considerable experience in Orthopaedic Surgery and my writing skills to do it. What you are reading about comes from my knowledge and experience. It doesn't come from a book.

- **M B**

Patients can get all the information they need from the Internet.

It is certainly true you can get a ton of information online. How often do you know the person who wrote it or how accurate it is?

In the office or hospital as a surgeon I am taking care of one patient at a time. As a writer who is a doctor (surgeon) I have the opportunity to educate and help a much larger group of people every week or in the case of my website, 24/7.

You can be informed and misinformed almost equally online. Knowing something about the author is invaluable.

- **M B**

A fracture is worse than a break.

I love this one as an orthopaedic surgeon. Often when I am explaining an injury to a patient and a concerned group of relatives, someone says "thank goodness it is only a break not a fracture". Of course, they are the same thing and we use the terms interchangeably. We'll never be able to stamp it out. Probably a fracture sounds more medical than "a break", so a fracture is thought to be more serious by patients.

It is certainly true there are an endless number of ways bones are fractured and some are much more serious and hard to heal than others.

- **M B**
A fracture (break) heals in six weeks.

If only this were true, but sadly it isn't. (Unless of course you are four years old!) It depends on the bone, where it occurred in the bone, the number of pieces, patient's age, etc. Some fractures I treat take six months to a year to heal and some refuse to heal altogether. Nature's healing can be very capricious.

- **M B**
A cane or one crutch is used on the same side as the bad leg.

Uh, nope. Just the opposite. It's hard to convince some patients that the cane or crutch goes on the opposite side to balance things out and properly relieve weight on the injured side. If I see I am getting nowhere I usually give up and hope they will figure it out.

Well, so much for Myth Busters I, the original edition. There will be more. I also promised some time ago to write some Funny Bones articles with interesting and sometimes humorous information about what I work with, the human musculoskeletal system.

For much additional accurate information about the musculoskeletal system log on to our office teaching website for patients and families at www.orthopodsurgeon.com which also can lead you to Your Orthopaedic Connection.

Our goal is simple - To help people return to more pain free, functional lives.

Be well.

Dr. Haverbush