

# ASHBY ADVISOR

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Happy February! Let's get away from the financial crisis and talk about health issues.

First, are we close to a crisis with a lack of primary care physicians in the U.S.? A recent survey by the Physician's Foundation revealed surprising results (especially to the surveyors). Approximately 12,000 physicians responded. Results: 1) 11% said they will retire in 1-3 years (that would equate to 35,000 by extrapolation) 2) 13% (41,000) plan to find non clinical healthcare work (non patient contact) 3) 10% will try to seek non health related jobs (32,000) 4) 14% are planning to cut back on patients or work part-time (44,000).

So about 1/3 of primary care (family) doctors are trying to get out of seeing patients. And 14% plan to cut back on their practice. 76% said their practices were "at or over" capacity. 60% would not recommend medicine as a career. (To top it off, fewer medical students are going into primary care or geriatrics, at the worst time possible.) Find your primary care in the next year or so if you haven't already. The times they are a changin'.

Here's an interesting finding from an older article, Clinical Nutrition, June 2004. Pomegranate juice consumed for 3 years (3 oz. per day) reduced carotid artery thickness by at least 1/3 (helping blood flow), reduced LDL, and reduced blood pressure 21%. Most of this was found in the first year. Pretty impressive with no drug intervention.

Finally, this interesting finding from a study reported in Scientific American Jan 9, 2009: California had a sevenfold increase in autism cases between 1990 and 2001. Part of the increase may be explained by diagnosis patterns. Migration patterns might explain some also. The comments on possible environmental causes:

- 1) Exposure to mercury or other heavy metals
- 2) Viruses or microbial infection
- 3) Electromagnetic Field exposure
- 4) My favorite, most logical cause – Vitamin D deficiency in pregnant woman. Another reason I feel that everybody needs to get a baseline Vitamin D level checked with blood work.

\*\*\*\*Quote of the month: Discussion is an exchange of knowledge, argument an exchange of ignorance.  
Robert Quillen