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### **Patients treated with respect more likely to follow medical advice**

Attention doctors: Want patients to follow your advice? Treat them with dignity, a Johns Hopkins study has found.

In a national survey of more than 5,000 Americans, those who said they were treated with dignity during their last medical encounter were more likely to report higher levels of satisfaction with their care, adhere to therapy and get preventive services.

Hopkins researchers, using data from the Commonwealth Fund 2001 Health Care Quality Survey, interviewed 5,514 Americans who reported having a medical encounter within the previous two years and who were white, African American, Hispanic or Asian. Most respondents were female (65 percent), had at least some college education (62 percent), had incomes of more than 200 percent of the poverty level (66 percent), and spoke English as their primary language (93 percent).

Overall, 76 percent of respondents reported being treated with a great deal of respect and dignity, and 77 percent reported being involved in decisions to the extent that they wished.

Being treated with dignity was significantly associated with adherence to treatment plans for racial and ethnic minorities, whereas being involved in decisions was significantly associated with adherence for whites.

These results are published in the July/August issue of the *Annals of Family Medicine*.

"Although involving patients in decisions is an important part of respecting their autonomy, it is equally important to respect patients more broadly by treating them with dignity," says Mary C. Beach, M.D., M.P.H., lead author and an assistant professor of medicine.

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