



DR. KAIWAN M. RANDERIA

Googlopathy: When Patients Self-Prescribe Treatments Using Google!

Dr. Kaiwan M. Randeria is an Orthopedic Surgeon, holding a Fellowship in Joint Replacement Surgery. He aims to increase awareness about bone health, which has been adversely affected in keeping with today's unhealthy lifestyle and nutritional issues. [Connect with him at: drkaiwan94@gmail.com]

In today's digital age, 'Dr. Google' has become every healthcare professional's unofficial, uninvited and wildly inaccurate colleague - the one who skips med school but still has a lot to say in the exam room! With the rise of search engines, medical symptoms are just a few clicks away from self-diagnosis, whether you're suffering from a simple headache or a fractured femur. Enter the age of 'Googlopathy', where the patient walks into the doctor's office with the diagnosis, treatment plan, and, in some cases, the exact brand of splints you should be using - all courtesy of Google!

The Googlopathy Effect: Diagnosing Yourself Before Your Appointment

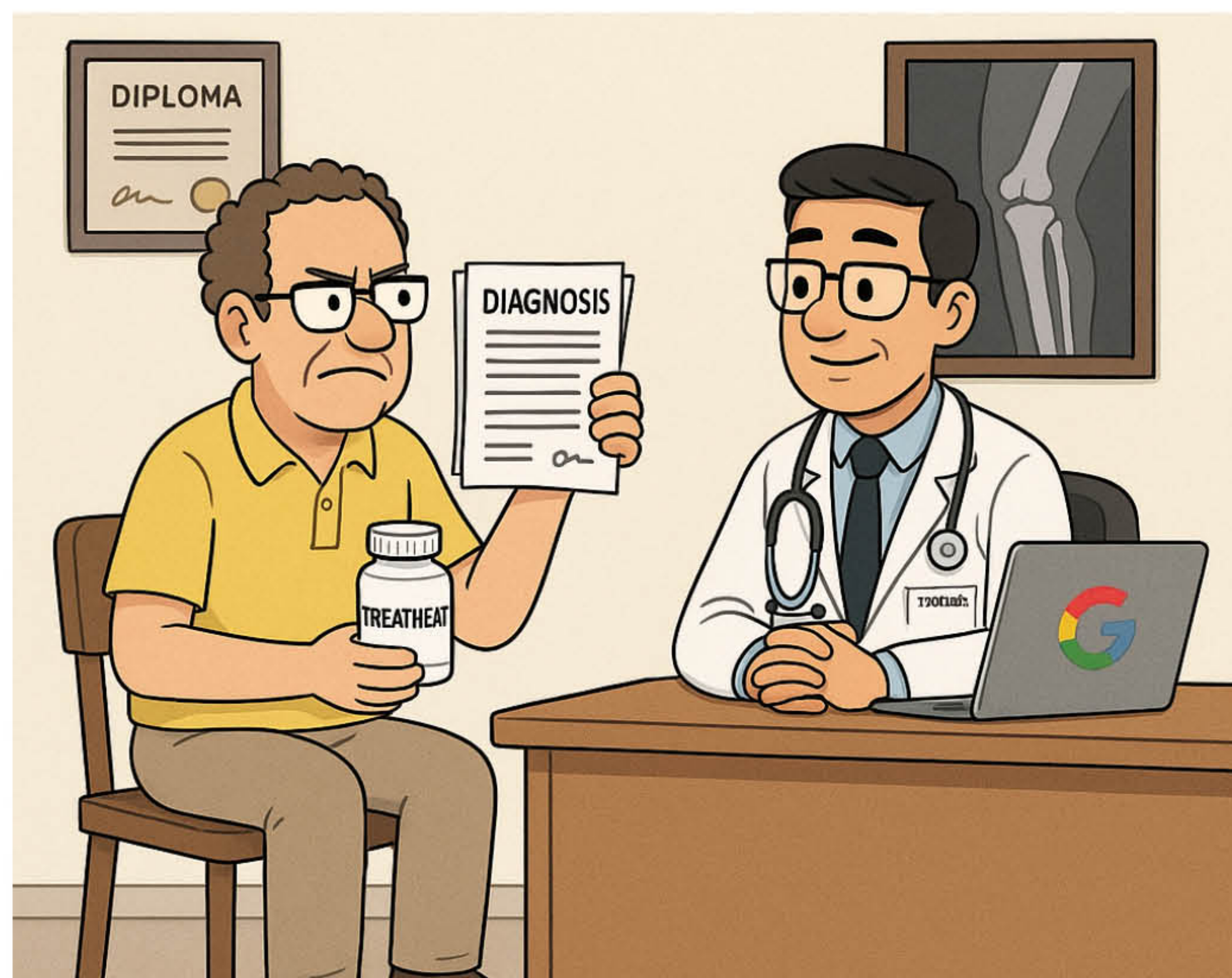
Googlopathy is essentially the art of pre-emptively telling your doctor what they should prescribe. It is a digital era power struggle between a few minutes of google search vs. years of study and practice but, in a humorous manner. In the world of orthopaedics, this can be particularly amusing. I remember one rather determined gentleman, who, armed with a folder full of printouts, came into the OPD and proclaimed, "Doc, I've Googled my symptoms. It's definitely severe rheumatoid arthritis in my knees! You can check the paperwork. It's all there." Of course, everything is never all there, especially

me in disbelief and said, "Wait, you mean I don't need long term medications?" I couldn't help but laugh. "No, I think some physiotherapy and maybe a break from Google might work wonders!"

The Gen-Z Community: Smart, Sceptical and Suffering from Googlopathy!

Today, when intellect and education are highly valued, it's no surprise that many people are keen on researching their ailments. This means that when they get a pain in their back or a crick in their neck, they're not just going to sit idly by and wait for a diagnosis, they're going straight to Google! Take a schoolteacher, who after experiencing a mild backache for a day, insists she's suffering from a 'herniated disc'. When I examined her, it was concluded the pain was simply due to a muscle spasm and poor posture which only required a few sessions of physio, to which she smiled sheepishly and admitted, "I thought I was being proactive. Google said 'disc problems' and that's what it sounded like!"

And then there was this young, aspiring footballer, who recently



recovery plan?" I had to stifle a chuckle. "Well, I admire your enthusiasm and your dedication to ankle health. But let's get an X-ray first. Just to make sure we're not dealing with something a little more serious." Thankfully, it was just a simple sprain, and he got the needed treatment.

The Road Ahead: Google vs. the Professionals

It's clear that Googlopathy is here to stay, especially in the tech-savvy community. But instead of fighting it, many doctors are learning to embrace it, a little bit. Google can be a double-edged sword - while it does educate the patient regarding any diagnosis or treatment, it's also a plethora of misguided knowledge, which when consumed from the wrong unofficial sources, leads to the patient worrying and acting unnecessarily.

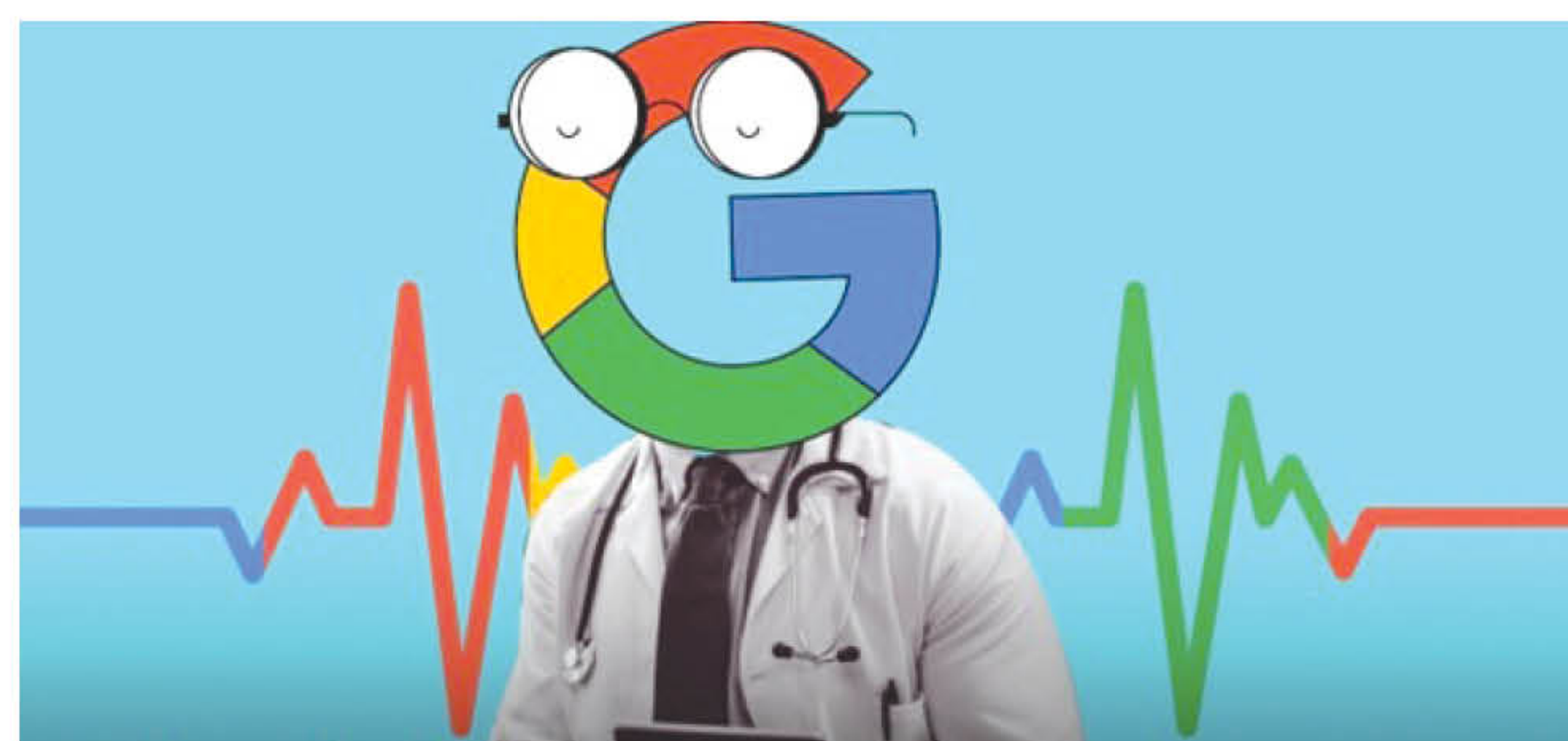
It's better to let the professionals do the diagnosing - after all, Google can't examine your knees like the professionals can! Sometimes, people even ignore many side symptoms while being fixated on google diagnoses, which again leads to potential misdiagnosis on their end.

Conclusion: When in Doubt, Ask Your Doctor!

While Google might have a lot of answers (or, let's be honest, too many answers), nothing compares to the knowledge and hands-on expertise of a qualified healthcare professional. So, next time you think you know what's wrong with your knee or back, remember that the doctor's office is there for a reason. And no, googling your symptoms at 3:00 a.m. doesn't qualify you as a board-certified orthopaedic surgeon - although, it might make for some entertaining waiting room banter!

About the Author: Dr. Kaiwan Randeria is an experienced orthopaedic surgeon based in Mumbai with a knack for injecting humor into the often-serious world of musculoskeletal care. He has seen it all - and, heard Googled opinions about it, too! When he's not diagnosing sprains or operating on fractures, he enjoys educating his patients about the fine line between medical advice and the vast ocean of online misinformation.

[Disclaimer: All the characters mentioned in this article are fictitious. Any resemblance to real persons, living or dead, is purely coincidental. The contents of this article should not be considered as formal medical advice. Kindly visit your Doctor for any related treatment.]



when it's printed out from the internet. But instead of bursting his bubble, "Alright," I said, "we'll get to the bottom of this, but let's run a few tests to be sure."

After an examination and some tests, it turned out he had mild osteoarthritis of his knee joint - nothing that Google had warned him about. He looked at

sprained his ankle while playing. He showed up to my OPD with a very professional-looking list of potential treatments. He'd even highlighted some YouTube videos on ankle exercises and confidently declared, "I'm 90% sure it's a Grade 2 sprain, but just in case it's Grade 3, I've already shortlisted a special brace, off Amazon. Can we skip the X-ray and just get straight to the