

Ethics in Pharmacy Practice

Ethical Theories & Principles Part 2

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Ethical theories

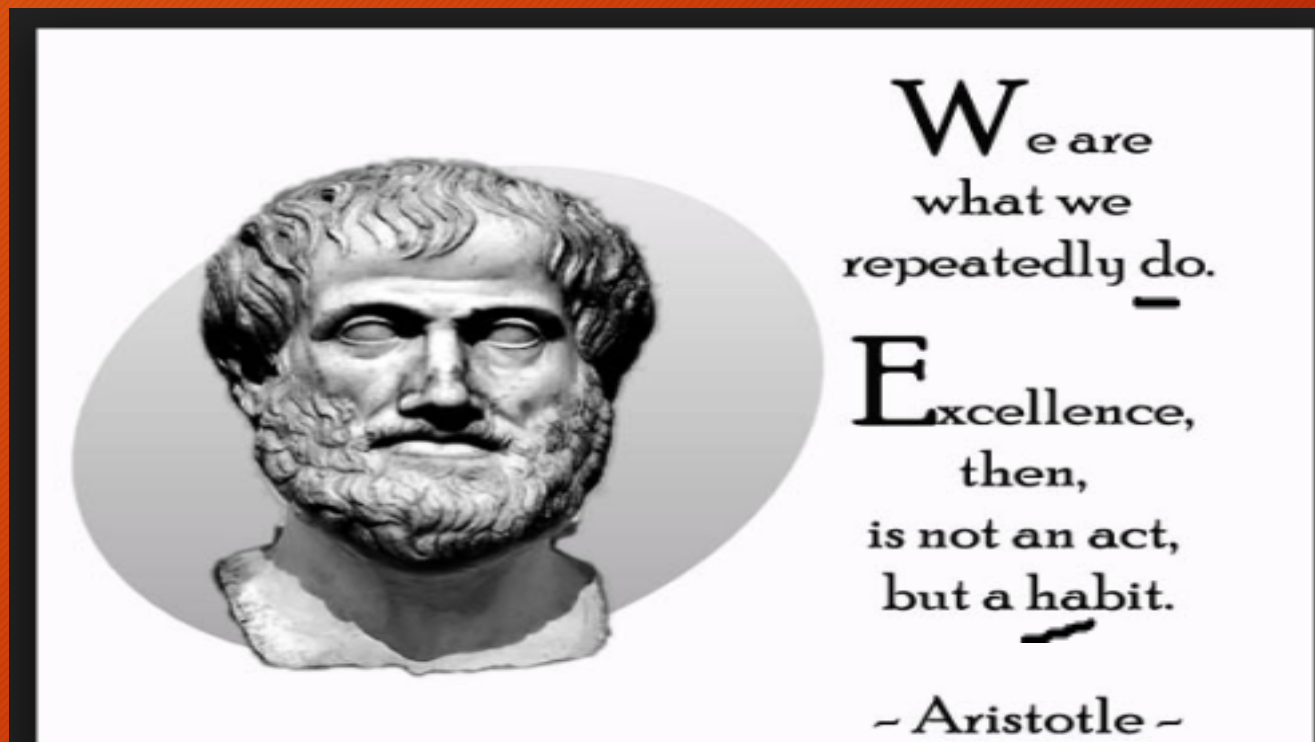
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- Provide the base (frame work) for which the acceptability of action or morality judgment can be assessed
- Absolute vs. relative theories
- Absolute: assume there is absolute right or wrong
- Relative: the right and wrong depend on how society behave
- Three major theories:
 - ((1)) Virtue Ethics
 - ((2)) Consequentialism and utilitarianism
 - ((3)) Deontology (Duty based)

Virtue Ethics

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- Emphasize on the character of person doing the action rather than the action itself
- Health care professional (in general)



History of Ethics in the Muslim World

- Rich Islamic heritage of *Virtue Ethics* that places emphasis on the “virtuous” physician.
- Al Tabari described the Islamic code of medical ethics in 970 AD to include the following:
 - personal characteristics of the physician
 - obligations towards patients, the community, and colleagues.



Al Tabari

Al-Tabari, the chief physician in 970. He wrote the Islamic code of ethics in his book Fardous Al-Hikma (The Paradise of Wisdom):

The screenshot shows a Microsoft Word document titled "Altabari Medical Ethics - Word". The ribbon is set to "Home", and the font is "Tahoma" size 14. The document content is as follows:

Al-Tabari, the chief physician in 970. He wrote the Islamic code of ethics in his book Fardous Al-Hikma (The Paradise of Wisdom) stressing the personal qualities of the physician, the physician's obligations toward his patients, community, and colleagues. The main points of Al-Tabari's code of medical ethics are as follows:

Personal Characters of the Physician: The physician ought to be modest, virtuous, merciful, and to not use liquor. He should

1. wear clean clothes, be dignified, and have well-groomed hair and beard;
2. not join the ungodly and scoffers of truth, nor sit at their table;
3. select his company from among persons of good reputation;
4. be careful of what he says and should not hesitate to ask forgiveness if he makes an error;
5. be forgiving and never seek revenge;
6. be friendly person and a peacemaker;
7. not make jokes or laugh at the improper time or place.

Obligation Toward Patients: The physician should avoid predicting

whether a patient will live or die, only God knows that

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History of Ethics in the Muslim World

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- Al-Ruhawi (9th Century AD)
 - *Adab al-Tabib* – “The Morals of the Physician”
 - As the name suggests, it focuses on adab, the Islamic concept of etiquette and personal ethics, as it is defined in a medical context.
 - The book includes three general categories: the conduct of the physician, the conduct of the patient, and the conduct of the public at large towards the medical profession and their patients.
 - The physician with ‘exemplary adab is one who truly fears God’
 - Virtues for physicians

Consequentialism and Utilitarianism

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- More practical
- Whether an action is morally right or wrong depends on the action's usefulness
- An action should be judged according to the results it achieves
- If an act is likely to produce the greatest good for the greatest number then it is right- if it does not, it is wrong



Abortion and Euthanasia



*There are two ways to lose your love.
One is to think nothing is possible.
The other is to think everything is possible.*
Albert Einstein (1879-1955)
www.fallin.com



Consequentialism and Utilitarianism

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- Evaluate action by reference to their outcome
- Depends on the action usefulness
- Simple & applicable theory
- Drawback: it ignores minority right and individual circumstances

Consequentialism and Utilitarianism

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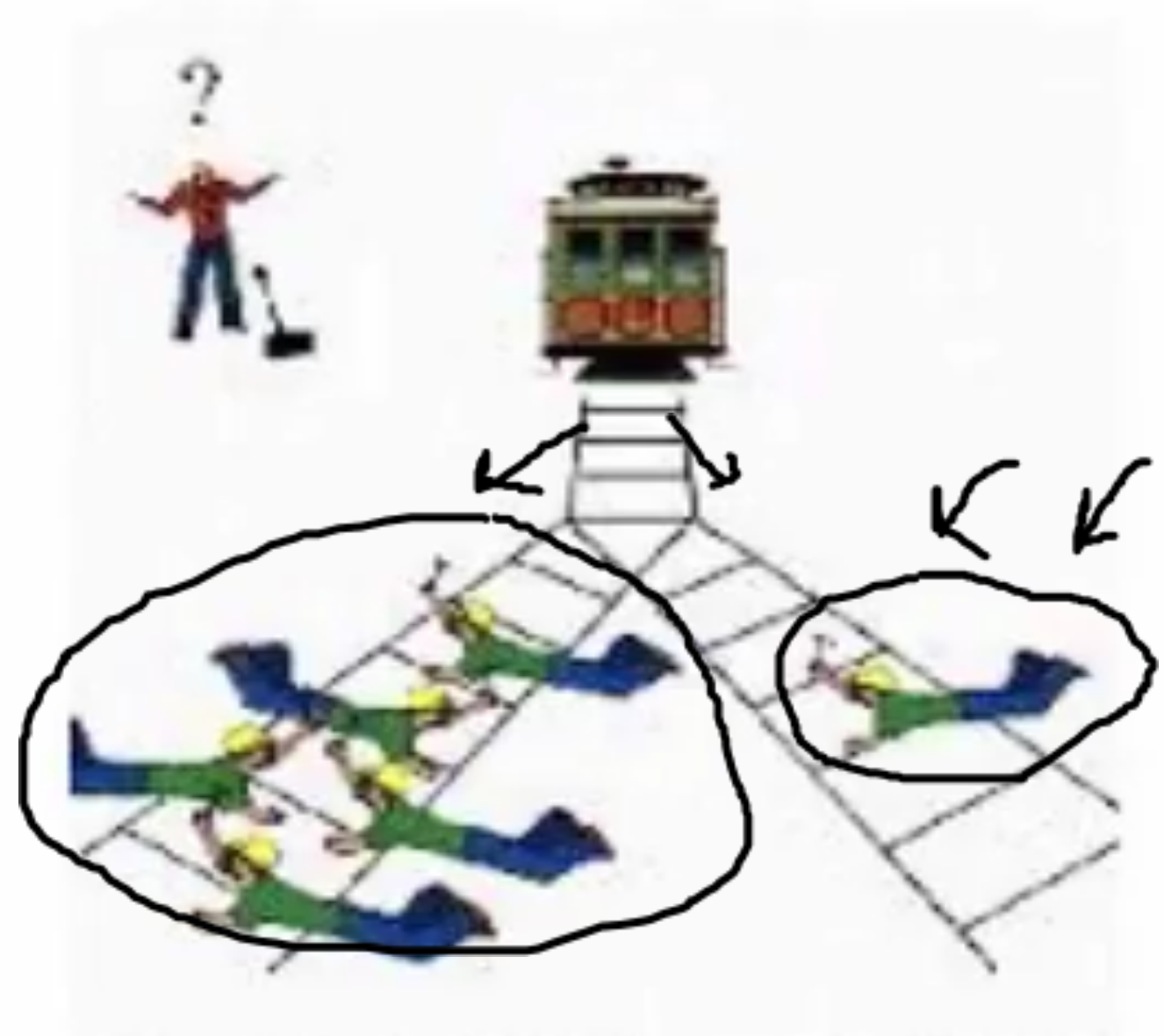
A simple example:

“A mother would like her daughter to focus on her homework. To ensure this, the mother tells her daughter that the television show her daughter watches daily will not be aired tonight. However, this is not the truth. The daughter focuses on her homework instead of watching television, and completes her schoolwork as a result.



Trolley Problems

- Suppose that a trolley is running down a hill at a fast speed, heading towards five people at the bottom of the street.
- When it reaches them it will surely kill all of them.
- You notice that there is a switch next to you that could direct the trolley to a side path where there is one man standing and once you do, it will be the one man that dies.
- Would you do it?



Deontology

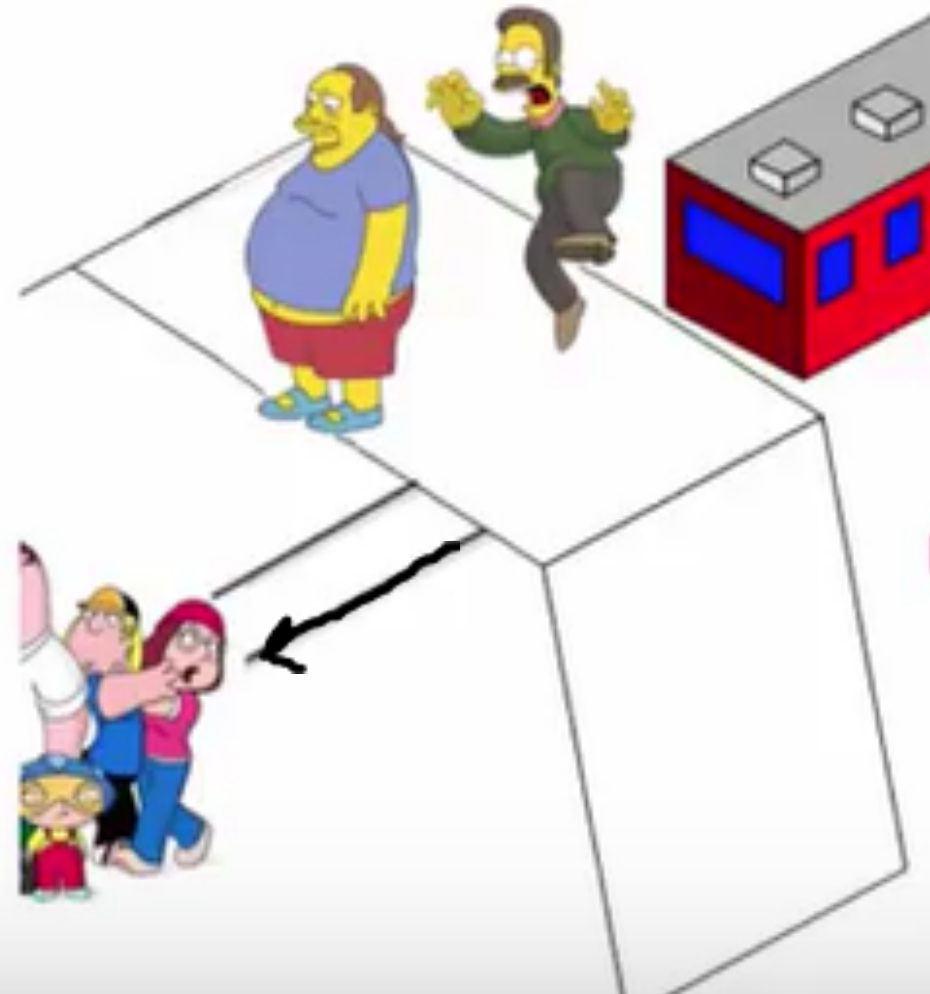
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- Deal with action as they are intrinsically right or wrong without regard to the consequence
- “the ends *never* justify the means”
- “Unless you are able to say that everyone must act like this, then you should not act like it”
- Deontological views are quite prominent in many religions and circles of belief

Consider the example given above of the mother and daughter according to this theory

Trolley Problems

- A trolley is again running down a hill at fast speed, aimed at five people at the bottom which it will surely kill.
- However this time you are standing on a bridge with a fat man next to you. If you push the fat man off the bridge the trolley will stop but kill that fat man.
- Would you do it?





Ethical Theories: Overview



- Modern ethical theories asks the question:
“is this action ethical?”
 - Consequences of the Action - Utilitarianism ethics
 - The Act itself - Deontologic ethics
 - “is the acting agent/physician a virtuous person?”

Deontological & Consequentialism

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- You are taking a child to a dentist for some work that you know will hurt
- On the way to the dentist he look up into your eyes and ask will this hurt?



Principles of Medical Ethics

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► *How do we combine these two theories to create medical ethics?*

Answer: Principles of medical ethics which strike a balance between consequentialism and deontology have been developed.

Saja Hamed, Ph.D

Introduction to Medical Ethics

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pLhtfYCGLMM&t=612s>

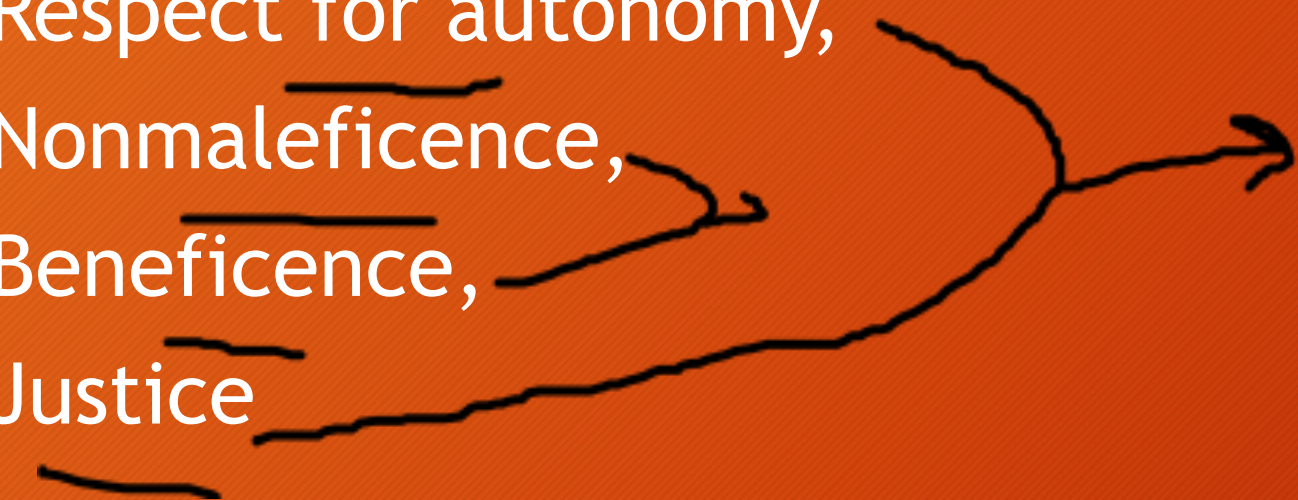
Principles Approach

- Principles of Medical Ethics
 - Autonomy
 - Beneficence
 - Non-maleficence
 - Justice
- 1 & 4 are deontological
- 2 & 3 are consequentialist
- Principlism identifies the main principles in conflicts in a case and attempts to “Balance” the principles and determine which principle is more important in that particular setting.



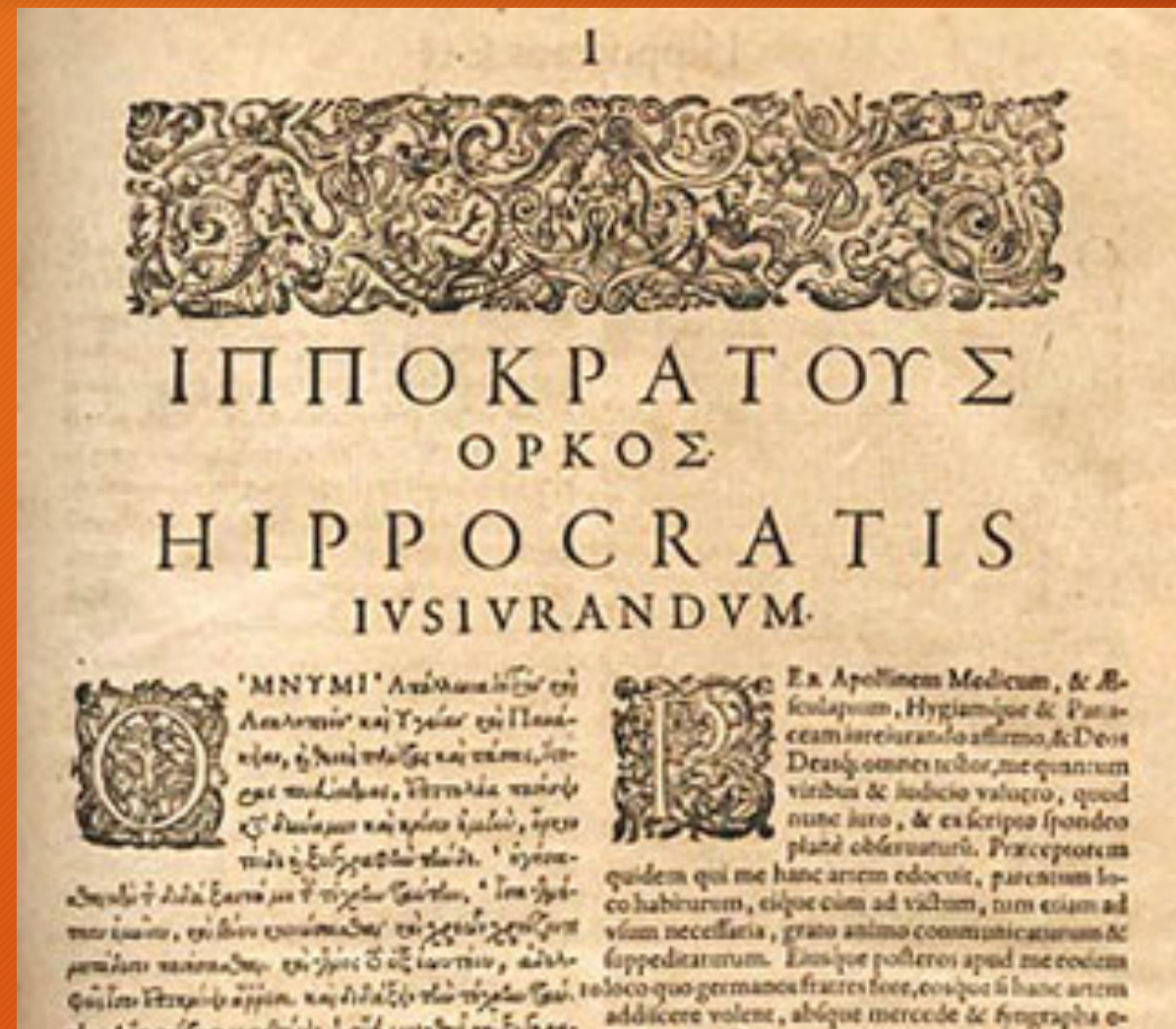
Principles of Medical Ethics

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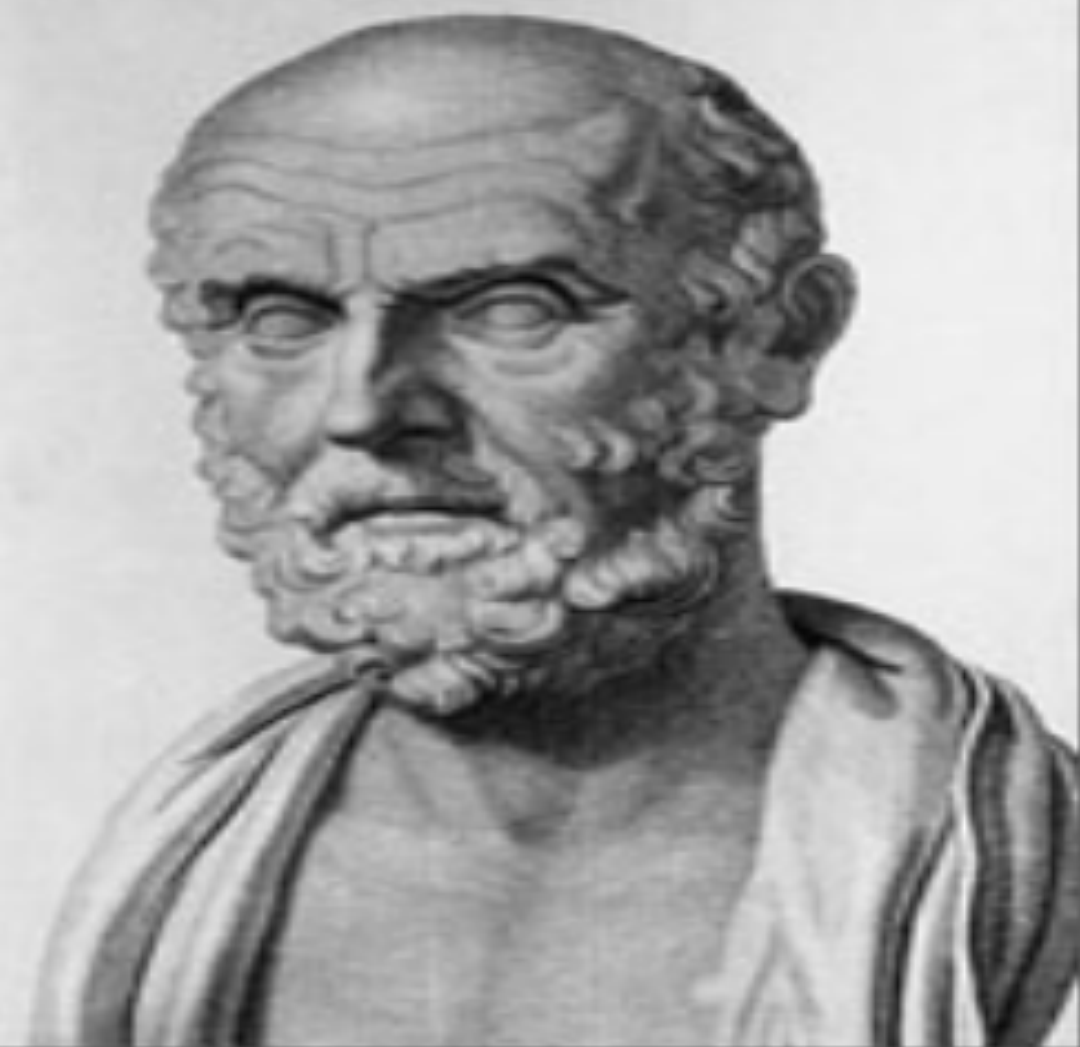
- Ethical principles provide general guidance for helping us make ethical decisions
 - **Four** generally accepted principles of health care:
 - a. Respect for autonomy,
 - b. Nonmaleficence,
 - c. Beneficence,
 - d. Justice
- 

Hipocratic oath

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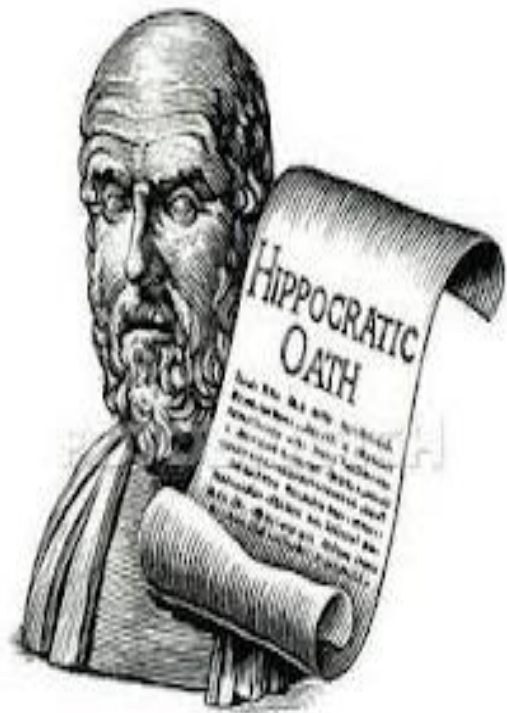
Hippocrates (c.460-377BC), the father of Western medicine.





I swear by Apollo, the Physician and Aesculepius and Hygeia and Panacea and all the gods and goddesses, making them my witnesses, that I will fulfill according to my ability and judgment this oath and this covenant:

To hold him who has taught me this art as equal to my parents and to live my life in partnership with him, and if he is in need of money to give him a share of mine, and to regard his offspring as equal to my brothers in male lineage and to teach them this art - if they desire to learn it - without fee and covenant; to give a share of precepts and oral instruction and all the other learning to my sons and to the sons of him who has instructed me and to pupils who have signed the covenant and have taken an oath according to the medical law, but no one else.



I will apply dietetic measures for the benefit of the sick according to my ability and judgment; I will keep them from harm and injustice.

I will neither give a deadly drug to anybody who asked for it, nor will I make a suggestion to this effect. Similarly I will not give to a woman an abortive remedy. In purity and holiness I will guard my life and my art.

I will not use the knife, not even on sufferers from stone, but will withdraw in favor of such men as are engaged in this work.

Whatever houses I may visit, I will come for the benefit of the sick, remaining free of all intentional injustice, of all mischief and in particular of sexual relations with both female and male persons, be they free or slaves.

What I may see or hear in the course of the treatment or even outside of the treatment in regard to the life of men, which on no account one must spread abroad, I will keep to myself, holding such things shameful to be spoken about.

If I fulfil this oath and do not violate it, may it be granted to me to enjoy life and art, being honored with fame among all men for all time to come; if I transgress it and swear falsely, may the opposite of all this be my lot.



Respect for Persons/Autonomy:	Acknowledge a person's right to make choices, to hold views, and to take actions based on personal values and beliefs
Nonmaleficence (do no harm):	Obligation not to inflict harm intentionally. In medical ethics, the guiding maxim is "First, do no harm."
Beneficence (do good)	Provide benefits to persons and contribute to their welfare. Refers to an action done for the benefit of others.
Justice:	Treat others equitably, distribute

Principles of Health Care Ethics

1. Autonomy

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- The principle of autonomy stems from the theory of deontology
- **Patient autonomy:** The right of patients to make decisions about their medical care without their health care provider trying to influence the decision.
- Patient autonomy does allow for health care providers to educate the patient but does not allow the health care provider to make the decision for the patient.

Principles of Health Care Ethics

1. Autonomy

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- It involves:
 - The patient can choose what type of treatment they would prefer given a choice, and even choose not to be treated
 - Helping the patient to come to his or her own decision
 - The patient decision should be respected even when it appears to be detrimental and illogical
 - Individuals should be treated as autonomous agents and that patient with diminished autonomy are entitled to protection

Principles of Health Care Ethics

1. Autonomy

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- The opposite of autonomy is paternalism: over-rides the principle of respect for autonomy and involves making decisions on behalf of another
- To ensure that autonomy is being considered in an ethical dilemma, ask yourself the following question: "What are the patient's wishes and values?"

Principles of Health Care Ethics :

2. Nonmaleficence

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- The principle of Non-maleficence is an obligation not to inflict harm intentionally
- Most persons who choose a health care career only want to help people, not harm them, so this principle would seem easy to apply
- It requires healthcare providers to do everything in their ability to avoid causing either intentional or unintentional harm

Principles of Health Care Ethics :

2. Non-maleficence

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- It require:
 - maintenance of competence through continuing education
 - Acting within the scope of practice and individual ability and doing everything to avoid making mistakes that can harm the patient
 - Healthcare providers have an ethical (as well as legal) obligation to report behaviors by others that adversely (or could adversely) affect the health, safety or welfare of patients

Principles of Health Care Ethics :

3. Beneficence

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- The principle of beneficence is a moral obligation to act to benefit others, that is, to act in the interest of others.
- Since many persons enter the profession of Pharmacy because they want to help others, this principle should seem obvious as an obligation
- Desires to help others can come into conflict:
 - with the principle of autonomy
 - Beneficence also may comes into conflict with Non-maleficence (drugs associated with some harm)
- Benefits have to be balanced against risks

Principles of Health Care Ethics :

3. Beneficence

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- We sometimes believe that they should do whatever we recommend since we have the most knowledge about their condition. The intentional overriding of one person's known preferences by another person is called paternalism
- **Paternalism:** policy or practice of treating or governing people in a fatherly manner, especially by providing for their needs without giving them rights or responsibilities.

Principles of Health Care Ethics :

3. Beneficence

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- When we believe that we know what is best for a patient even when they do not agree, we risk stepping over the boundary from beneficence to paternalism.
- When this happens, the patient's autonomy is not respected.

Principles of Health Care Ethics :

3. Beneficence

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Some examples of paternalism include :

- providing a treatment that the patient has refused.
- Withholding all or part of the information that a patient needs to make an informed decision in order to sway the patient to agree to your recommendation is also a form of paternalism.
- If you find that you are trying to convince patients to do things your way by saying, "It is for your own good," you might be using a form of paternalism.

Autonomy vs. Beneficence?

- Who determines the good of the patient?
- How do we know that a patient is able to make decisions?



Autonomy vs. Nonmaleficence (do no harm):

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Beneficence and Non-Maleficence

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- So how do we rectify the conflict between the principles of beneficence and non-maleficence? We balance the benefits and harm. Ask yourselves the question: "What can be done for the patient and what are the benefits and harms?"

Accept the lesser of two harms

Abortion in risk to the pregnant woman

- A young woman is 11 weeks pregnant and suffers from pulmonary hypertension. She is now suffering from heart failure and the doctors have determined that the continuation of the pregnancy will cause her death. An abortion is considered.
- Should the abortion be carried out?

Principles of Health Care Ethics :

4. Justice

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- All people of equal need are entitled to be treated equally in the distribution of benefits and burdens regardless of race, gender, religion, and socio-economic status...etc
- Justice requires only morally defensible differences among people be used to decide who gets what
- opposite: discrimination
- In ER → triage system
- Fairness in distribution of benefits and burdens

Principles of Health Care Ethics :

4. Justice

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- ▶ There are at least three types of justice:
 - a. Compensatory: Compensatory justice concerns compensation for wrongs that have been done
 - b. Procedural: Procedural justice involves how the laws are procedurally carried out
 - c. Distributive: Distributive justice involves the fair allotment of benefits or burdens, especially when there is competition for resources.
- ▶ In health care, we often refer to the fairness of resource allocation.
- ▶ Deciding who will receive a liver or a heart for a transplant is an example of a distributive justice issue.

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Principles of Health Care Ethics :

4. Justice

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- To ensure that you are considering the principle of justice when faced with an ethical dilemma, ask yourself the following question: "Is the patient being treated fairly, and are his/her needs able to be satisfied?"



Principles of Health Care Ethics :

4. Justice

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- ▶ Patients should understand that it may be their own agreement with their insurance or managed care company that could result in a limitation of care.
- ▶ Establishing these guidelines prior to treatment will help patients understand that you are trying to fairly provide care to them within a system that may set arbitrary guidelines.



Ethical principles

Four ethical principles

1. Autonomy- Self governance and respect for persons
2. Non-maleficence avoiding harm
3. Beneficence- providing good
4. Justice- fairness

► Supplemented with four “rules”:

1. Veracity
2. Privacy
3. Confidentiality
4. Fidelity

Veracity (truth-telling)

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- The obligation to tell the truth
- Self determination requires that health professionals be honest with their patients
- Patients need accurate and understandable information to make good decisions
- An essential component of informed consent and hence respect of autonomy

Privacy

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- Respect privacy come under the ethical principle of respect for a person's autonomy
- Restrict access to what a person regards as private and personal and not to be invaded

Fidelity

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- Promise-keeping
- Invitation for patient to trust the pharmacist
- The pharmacist “be there” for the patient
- Acting in good faith, keeping promises, fulfilling agreements, integrity and honesty
- When a pharmacist wonders whether to sell ineffective but heavily promoted nonprescription drug products or non proven herbal remedies → the principle of fidelity asserts itself

Why there is a need to increase ethical awareness among health professionals

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- There is advances and change in health care and medical technology
- Example: compliance then concordance (because I am expert in medication and patient is expert in life style) → Autonomy

Common ethical issues in pharmacy practice

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- Privacy and confidentiality
- Medical research
- Drug promotion
- Euthanasia
- Substance abuse
- Contraception
- Abortion