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## [The Way the Internet Brings Old School Medicine Back](#)

### *House calls and email, the perfect recipe*

The medical system is always in need of a change, be it in the way patients are treated, or in the fees being paid to doctors or by doctors. That's why Dr. Howard Stark decided to take his practice online: no more queues in front of his office, and the advice he gives those turning to him via email is free. Plus, it adds some personal detail, because in a message you get to talk about something else, not just the pain and problems. That's how he finds out about the patients' kids and how they're doing, so when they come in, once a year, for the checkup, he is in touch with everything that had been going on. "People say how impersonal e-mail is. No way. It is so personal because I can hear what is going on with the kids," he told Reuters. "It keeps me a lot closer to what is going on with my patients," he added. "I feel like I have taken 21st century medicine back to being more like the old-fashioned physician who knows how your family is doing." Two years have passed since Stark made his decision to go online and, in the meantime, he's received over 14,000 emails, "that's 14,000 phone calls that we did not have to answer and that patients did not have to make," he says proudly. Like I said, he does not charge anything for answering the emails, and neither for the prescription refills or questions about medication. He even received once a picture of a scorpion that stung one of his patients. "I said, 'it would have been better to send me a picture of your leg,'" he laughed. This means, of course, that by answering many problems without the patient having to move to his office, the people who do come are treated carefully and are allocated about half an hour per visit, instead of the quick 10 minutes that regular doctors allow themselves to spend. And, he saves about 50 thousand dollars a year only from staff cost. Perhaps this should be adopted on a wider scale?