

Beware of standardized care warns independent Riverside physician

Dr. Eduardo Balbona is an advocate for evidence-based medicine with an emphasis on disease prevention and health maintenance through education. He takes a deliberative, proactive approach to lifelong care and is interested in innovations that help patients live better lives, even if those treatments are considered controversial.

He has been practicing medicine for three decades, has served as a naval officer, has been a U.S. Capitol physician, and is in full agreement with the 1990s motto of "Standards of Care." He wants blood pressure to be controlled and sugars within a range of levels. What Dr. Balbona is in opposition to is "Standardized Care," which says that there is only one way to treat a particular malady. "When medical care gets standardized, there are perverse incentives and monetary bonuses distributed behind the scenes," he said.

Evidence of this became apparent when COVID relief funds were paid to medical organizations that followed protocols set forth by the CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention), a government agency. Any deviation meant denial of disbursement. "The government has no place dictating people's healthcare. Making recommendations is one thing, but enforcing mandates is another. In the pandemic, the greatest failure of many physicians and hospitals was obedience to government guidelines. Their true responsibility was to their patients and not to the government," Dr. Balbona said.

In his treatment of COVID, Dr. Balbona follows a non-standardized plan that may involve the prescribing of pharmaceuticals like hydroxychloroquine or ivermectin. He believes that the government stance on these therapies has overstepped into territory that ought to be reserved for medical professionals.

Dr. Balbona's approaches to coronavirus follow a string of successes in his medical techniques that had, at first, been deemed controversial. Over two decades ago, he was the first doctor in Jacksonville to do heart calcium scoring, a test to find heart disease before it becomes symptomatic. He was also one of the first physicians in Jacksonville to noninvasively help people build muscle and lower body fat with the use of Emsculpt Neo® technology. That, too, is still somewhat controversial but seems to help patients live better lives and feel good about themselves, so he actively promotes it.

As a solo practitioner, Dr. Balbona refuses to be coerced or intimidated. As a pioneer in the medical field, Dr. Balbona is trying to make medicine better, not to stagnate. He brazenly admits to not following CDC guidelines unless they are in a patient's best interest. "The CDC can't treat the patient I am seeing at the bedside. A hospital, a pharmacist, they do not have the license or the education to practice medicine. They should not be doing it. And our Florida governor agrees," Dr. Balbona said.

Doctors who are under the control of corporations or the government are compromised. That's why finding an independent physician like Dr. Balbona, someone committed to treating the individual, is crucial.

"The art of practicing medicine is currently dying," Dr. Balbona said. Many ill people might not ever see an experienced, qualified physician; physician assistants are now tasked with meeting patients in office. Other patients might not ever see an actual person at all now that computer applications are becoming more popular. Users type their symptoms into the system and a prescription is emailed or texted back in response. "I am shocked by what has happened in medicine. We, as a society, need to care more about our health," Dr. Balbona said.

Ever devoted to innovation in healthcare, Dr. Balbona is a founding participating physician of ClienteleHealth and offers his patients the option of membership in this new concierge service. Members enjoy enhanced levels of attention with more timely appointments and confidential e-mail and cell phone privileges for reaching Dr. Balbona whenever a question or medical issue arises. Dr. Balbona's Art of Medicine practice distinguishes itself by emphasizing a personal relationship between him and his patients.

Dr. Balbona has been practicing in his Riverside office since 2007 and is fluent in both English and Spanish. He is also a published author. In his first book, *Open Your Eyes: A Prescription for Change in American Health Care* published in 2019, he shares his expert advice on how U.S. healthcare can be improved so that both patients and doctors can thrive. He is currently preparing a second book for publication, one in which he will share patients' stories of surviving coronavirus.



Find out more about Dr. Balbona and his Art of Medicine practice by visiting www.BalbonaMD.com or by calling his office at 904-388-9202.

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