

# SEE YOUR DOCTOR

## Tips For Talking With Your Physician

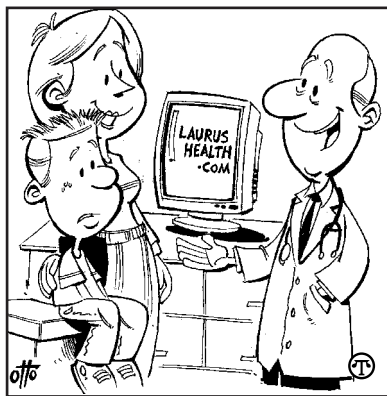
(NAPSA)—After you visit your physician, do you remember information about your diagnosis? Are there days when you have difficulty deciding whether or not your child's illness warrants a trip or a call to the doctor? The Internet has become a quick, easy and inexpensive way for millions of people to get health information.

When a parent takes a child to the doctor because he or she is not feeling well, the doctor generally diagnoses the illness and provides a quick list of instructions for care. Time with physicians and nurses is limited, and parents may be able to ask only a few questions before heading home to follow the doctor's instructions. By the time they get home, those instructions often have already been forgotten.

The Internet has opened up a new way to communicate valuable medical information between physicians and patients. Because of the limited time physicians have to spend with patients, the Internet is an important and useful tool being adopted by many physicians.

When patients use the Internet to communicate with their physicians, it creates the opportunity for physicians to provide very specific, targeted information to patients. Physicians can direct patients to an appropriate Web site or section of a site, allowing doctor and patient to literally be "on the same page." It facilitates documentation for the patient record, and provides a level of comfort for patients who can refer back to the information as often as needed.

"Communicating reliable health information is a critical element of patient care," said Peter J. Plantes, M.D., medical director at



**Accredited Web sites can offer parents healthy doses of information about their child's well-being.**

VHA Inc., a national health care alliance. "The Internet provides the opportunity for physicians to give clear, concise and up-to-date information to their patients about their medical conditions."

Plantes offers these suggestions for using the Internet to communicate with your physician or physician's nurse.

- Ask your physician to refer you to an accredited Internet health information resource, such as [www.LaurusHealth.com](http://www.LaurusHealth.com).

- Confirm that your physician is using the same health information Web site as you are, so that you can read and refer back to his advice.

- Have your physician refer you to specific pages, chapters or sections of the Web site that relate to your condition.

"The Internet is a great resource for patients and physicians alike," said Dr. Plantes. "When a secure, confidential, accredited site is used to communicate, the potential to improve care is great."