

## A Tribute to a Wonderful Nurse Practitioner

By Mary Armstrong

Long ago, when I was in college, I received health care from the university's student health clinic. This is not a place where you would expect top of the line care, as it was run much like a health department. You rarely had the opportunity to make an appointment with the same doctor twice, and the majority of your visit involved waiting to see a doctor who would speak with you for two minutes before writing you a prescription or sending you off for lab work.

Needless to say, the care you received was adequate and made you well, but patients were not really given the opportunity to create a relationship with their doctor. So when I made an appointment at the student health clinic for an issue that was just as mysterious as it was painful, I thought twice about making my appointment elsewhere. I just didn't have faith that they could cure the problem.

In an effort to save money, I kept the appointment at the clinic. When the patient room door opened, a smiling lady walked in and introduced herself as "Suzy." She continued by saying that she was a nurse practitioner.

"Great," I thought to myself, "this is going to be a waste of time. There's no way she's going to be able to figure out what is wrong. She's just a nurse practitioner."

Little did I know, "Suzy" was going to become my saving grace. Her approach to health care was methodical yet personal. She carefully administered treatments and gauged my improvement. She changed treatments in accordance to whether they were working, not working or making it worse. She continually included me in the process, always reminding me how important it was for me to be exact with the description of my pain and to be honest about my personal health behaviors.

For three months, I was in and out of the clinic trying to find a cure for my pain. Throughout this time, "Suzy" continued to remind me that she was diligently searching for an answer but that the nature of the issue required narrowing down the causes and treatments. And although I was beginning to lose faith that there was even a cure for my illness, I never lost faith in "Suzy." Her determination, intelligence and caring attitude was assuring to me.

It was probably the tenth trip to the clinic, but a cure was finally found. Somehow "Suzy" had narrowed down that a medication I had been taking for years was causing my pain. I was skeptical to stop taking the medication, but she wrote me a prescription for another medication that accomplished the same task. Not one week after stopping the old medication, my pain was gone. It hasn't returned since.

I write this short tribute as a testament to the wonderful care given to patients by nurse practitioners. Before "Suzy," I held the belief that nurse practitioners were nothing but nurses who could diagnose common colds and prescribe cough medicine. This belief is nothing but myth.

Because of “Suzy,” I was able to get my life back. I truly believe that a cure for my pain was found, because she took the time to get to know me and carefully track my health patterns. A quick ten minute visit would have never sufficed. Not only did she take her time during the first visit, but she insisted that I continue to see her to narrow down all the causes and effects of each treatment.

“Suzy” was a model health care provider. With great care, she treated my pain. I was more than another patient to her; I was a human being who desperately wanted to live pain-free. Instead of assuming that my problem was “this” or “that” and prescribing me a pain medication, she took a more holistic approach. I wish there were more doctors like this nurse practitioner.

Mary Armstrong is a writer and editor for [Medical Assistant Colleges](#). She enjoys writing articles for other sites on various topics of interest. For privacy reasons, she has decided to keep the health condition mentioned in her writing unidentified.