



# Doc Talk

Get to know your peers in Doc Talk, CME's interview department! Join us every month as we talk to physicians across Canada about their careers, their lives and... their quirks.

## Based in:

Edmonton, Alberta

## Special interests:

- I have been a GP in Edmonton for the past 20 years.
- My special interest depends on what stage of life I am in
- I was extremely interested in gynecology as a young woman. Then, after the kids, it was pediatrics because I could relate to those snotty kids in dirty diapers
- Presently, I am working on how to communicate normally with those gothic teenagers with three dozen rings in their lip
- We left the city because of the kids... but they found us...
- I am definitely retiring before I will have an interest in geriatrics!

## 1. Do you prefer to sing in the shower, or in the car?

I would definitely not be able to sing in the shower because my gothic kids are in my bathroom all the time. Singing in the car is tricky... it is difficult to explain to the police officer that while singing the lyrics to "Dead man's curve" you forgot to glance at the speedometer. It would be even trickier to explain to your 40 patients in the waiting room why you were late.

## 2. Do you have a life philosophy?

I use to think that the reason why I chose medicine was because God gave me the privilege of servicing those in pain and misery. However, after interning at the hospital years ago and working more than 100 hours per week, I think Ralph Klein and his predecessors, along with Alberta Health Care have been scheming something to how to squeeze every ounce of juice out of the interns! No, seriously, I learned many important lessons as a young 23-year-old. I learned from a much wiser second-year family medicine resident that when the going gets tough (*ie*: when you are bombarded by patients from every ward of the hospital), there is only one motto: "Don't explain. Don't complain. Just do your job!" This good advice helped me deal with some tough times. Don't sit and complain but do the best you can and get the job done.

## 3. What song would you chose as your personal theme song?

I love to hum to the tune of Celine Dion's hit "The Power of Love." I feel the world is meaningless without love. From the time you are born with the unconditional love from your parents, to the time you meet your spouse, you are protected in a cocoon filled with love and happiness. After you have

children, the love you shower onto them is what gives you joy and happiness. That is what makes it worthwhile going to work each day worthwhile, in a caring profession.

## 4. So far, what is your most memorable experience as a doctor?

When I was interning with seven male interns many moons ago, I was able to help another intern in need. I was in a C-section case in the OR and was the pediatrics intern to receive the newborn. Phil, the O&G intern was scrubbed in, assisting the obstetrician. In those days, nobody was allowed to be ill. Phil was not feeling well. Right after the baby was delivered, Phil vomited. The vomitus shot up out of his mask and nearly hit the open abdomen. I ran over and bumped Phil off the operating table after a quick scrub. Of course, the patient was on IV antibiotics and the surgeon was horrified. I was glad I was there to help.

## 5. Who would you get to play you in a movie about your life?

I recently watched *The Devil Wears Prada*. Anne Hathaway gave a great performance and is an actress I can identify with. Anne Hathaway as Andy, the aspiring journalist, lands a job under an obsessive and over demanding boss from hell, played by Meryl Steep. We've all had the proverbial "bad experiences" from a preceptor or staff member who is usually the head of the department in medical school. Similar to Andy, we had to do what it took to hang in there until the next rotation. The film brought back memories when the medical student had to jump to every whim of the Staff Man, Chief Resident and Junior Resident. That's right, you were lower than the janitor. However, after such an experience, we certainly respect those who will be learning from us.



**Dr. Janet Chiu**  
BMSc, MD  
Family Medicine

## Stay Tuned...

Join us next month as we Doc Talk to:

### Dr. Simon Trissman

- MD, FRCSC, diplomate American Board of Urology
- Staff Urologist Royal Inland Hospital Kamloops, BC
- Female Urology (the study of female incontinence)
- Previously won a gold medal at the 1985 Canada Summer Games, AOA

## 6. What is the least enjoyable job you have ever had?

As a physician, I would like to nominate that the most despicable job would be the finding of “lost” tampons and other “items” in the female anatomy. After finding such treasures, my staff usually disappears and I’m left with emptying the garbage and fumigating the examination room. Other items lost in that area include very old condoms, body piercings, dentures and parts of acrylic nails. It is amazing that most patients don’t even know what they had lost until the dreaded annual Pap test.

## 7. What's the best piece of advice you've ever been given?

When I was a new driver at age 16, my mom told me that when you are on the road, no matter how tired, upset, or careless you are feeling, you must keep your wits and give your attention to the other drivers. I had just returned from Montreal after spending six months doing a rotation in Neurology at the Montreal Jewish General Hospital. As I drove down the familiar streets of my home town, another automobile sped through a red light and struck my car. Looking over the extensive damage, I angrily walked over to the guilty driver screaming: “For six months I lived in Quebec where they have the worst drivers in the world and I don’t get even a single scratch on my car. I’m back home in Edmonton for one day and you come along and practically kill me! What’s the matter with you anyway?” The other driver looked up, wrinkled his forehead and replied, “Quoi? Quoi? Je ne parle pas anglais...”

## 8. If you could have 15 minutes of fame, what would you be famous for?

Definitely, I would be delighted to develop the female equivalent of Viagra and its name would be Miagra. The added benefit would

be that it would eliminate any migraines as well. I’m afraid to say that the only claim to fame to this date would be my performance as “The Flaming Ladies” along with 10 other classmates at the annual Med Show. Female medical students are not cut out to be cabaret dancers but we worked very “hard” at it and had a great time in between the giant penis spraying the audience.

## 9. Vacations: under the stars or five-star hotel?

This is directly related to which phase of life you are in. When I was a poor medical student, I was able to camp with my classmate from Edmonton to Vancouver Island under the stars for several weeks. Now, as a busy family doctor with kids, the hotel sounds great...especially if you don’t have to cook or clean up afterwards. Although, I must admit, even under the most planned out vacations, my last trip was like “European Vacation” with Chevy Chase. We lost all of our baggage on the way to Miami to board a cruise. On the first night, the Captain ordered all passengers to stand on deck with our life jackets because of a bomb scare. I figured that a patient must have overheard that I was going on a cruise and sent a special “package” on board to revenge my absence.

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## Want to be interviewed?

If you’d like to talk to our readers or would like to nominate a colleague, feel free to contact us at **cme@sta.ca**.

**You could be the next to appear in Doc Talk!**