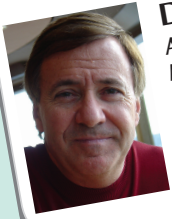


Doc Talk

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.



Dr. Craig Bergstrom
AB Honors 1973,
MD 1977 (McGill Medical)
Family Physician and on
Staff at Lion's Gate Hospital

Based in:

North Vancouver,
British Columbia

Medical special interests:

- Birth to grave, full service practice
- Medical research
- Facilitating small group physician learning and continuing education
- Cruise ship physician. I have been a part-time physician aboard the Windstar Holland-American cruise line for the past 18 years

Other information:

I like being active. I play senior league hockey in the winter and I golf and bike in the summer. I try to practice what we preach!

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

Showers offer echo bonus and the sound of the water masks your inadequacies. *The Lion Sleeps Tonight* is awesome hummed, whistled or sung in many different keys... none of which I know!

2. Do you have a life philosophy?

Life is not a dress rehearsal: live it and love it. Get the chip off your shoulder, enjoy what you have and don't envy what you don't have.

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

Early on in my life *Hands Up* was a winner, but as the rigors of medical practice set in, *Life is a Highway* and *All Night Long* would be tuned in deep in my cerebral cortex. After a stressful week *Don't Let Me Be Misunderstood* and *River Deep, Mountain High*, would echo in my subconscious. Today, *Life is Life* by Opus would tie it all together.

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

Diagnostic coups are gratifying and ego building, but those intimate moments we share with patients, as we are privy to the inner sanctum of their soul, are unique and can be emotionally draining, but can also be personally enlightening. I remain in awe, as I daily observe up close, the strength of the human spirit. One recent case involved a hysterical 15-year-old girl who had a morbid fear of needles. She sobbed and curled into a ball in a chair, while her mother frantically urged her to grow up and stated that there would be no trip to Mexico without her hepatitis shots. I revisited the room five

times over the next hour, talking to her each time to gain her confidence and in order for her to hopefully deal with this fear. Finally, success... no restraint, a tearful smile and the statement as she left the room: "doctor, I will be fine from now on!"

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

Putting modesty in my back pocket, I would have to say Dustin Hoffman in *The Graduate* (1967). He was naive but keen to learn! Dustin Hoffman's career is full of diverse roles often with powerful psychological components. Hoffman's tremendous versatility allows him to portray difficult roles such as in *Midnight Cowboy*, *Rainman*, *Tootsie*, *Marathon Man* and *Wag the Dog*. He has acted in roles which reflect the personal growth we all go through. This includes the good, the bad and the ugly! I consider myself something of a dilettante with a broad range of interests and Hoffman could certainly do a fascinating and engaging job with any biography.

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

Acutally there was two jobs. One summer as a student, I worked at a shovel factory. It was eight weeks of hell. I attached snow shovel heads to wooden shafts, one barrel an hour, with ten minute breaks every two hours, determined by the horn. The other job, I worked as an orderly at a polio hospital in Winnipeg. I worked overnight transferring patients from their tilt beds into the iron lung machines and out again in the morning. It was tough physically and emotionally.



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Stay Tuned...

Join us next month
as we Doc Talk to

Dr. Aly Abdulla

- Assistant Professor,
The University of
Ottawa
- Medical Director,
The Kingsway Health
Centre, Manotick,
Ontario

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

This is a difficult question, but I would have to say: live today like there is no tomorrow, live tomorrow from what you learned today. If you are honest, honesty will follow you all through your life and be your friend, your strength and your solace. My best personal advice would be **one wife** (thanks Danielle, 28 years and counting)!

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

The classic sports hockey dream... diving to stop the breakaway, jumping up to skate the length of the ice to notch the overtime winner. But, the real fantasy about my 15 minutes of fame would involve me finding the courage to perform an act of heroism, extending myself beyond my comfort zone. Would I run into that burning house, talk down that bridge jumper, take the lead in a non-medical crisis? I hope so!

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

A Grand Canyon rafting trip for 10 days, shared with my good friend Dr. Doug McTaggart, was the ultimate experience. The guides said on the first day that we would not be the same after seeing the canyon: the visual delight, the physical exertion, the camaraderie, the time alone, sleeping in the open on mats on the sand, the unbelievable nighttime sky, the sunrises and the light. One day, while on a hike, we were asked by our guide to lie down flat and to face up toward the sky looking at the deep canyon walls. Then she told a wonderful Indian legend. It echoed against the walls and it remains with me to this day!

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Wanna 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 *Doc Talk*!