

Informed Consent - Role Play

Case 2 - Vaginal Hysterectomy Consent

Physician: Ronnie Harris

Judy Brown is a 58 year old woman who presents with post-menopausal bleeding. A superficial endometrial carcinoma was found on D&C. A vaginal hysterectomy was recommended and is scheduled. You are the surgical resident who must obtain Mrs. Brown's signature on the consent form.

Patient: Judy Brown

You are a 58 year old woman experiencing post-menopausal vaginal bleeding. You have undergone a number of examinations and tests, and your doctor has recommended a vaginal hysterectomy. You agreed to have the operation, but you really did not understand what your doctor explained to you about your condition or the procedure. You didn't ask any questions because doctors really make you nervous, and you were already pretty upset about needing an operation. Your doctor gave you some written materials to take home. You are embarrassed to admit it, but you never learned to read.

Note: An important part of this exercise is for the doctor to discover the patient's level of understanding (poor) and to try to fill in the gaps. Maybe the doctor will offer the written form instead of a verbal explanation. Your character is embarrassed about not reading and won't volunteer the information readily.