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HEALTH QUOTE

"While we may not be able to control all that happens to us, we can control what happens inside us."

— Benjamin Franklin

Visiting Dr. Dave

Doctor has remedy for hassle, cost of health care

By JONATHAN SCHENBERG
Special to amNewYork

The X-rays wrapped around the light fixtures in the lobby of his Lower East Side office are a bit unusual for a doctor's office. But Dr. David Ores is not your usual doctor.

Ores, or Dr. Dave as he is known to many of his patients, is a tattooed Harley-riding rebel physician trying to treat an ailing U.S. health care system infected, he says, by a virus called health insurance companies.

"Medicine used to be a profession in which there

was a direct relationship between the patient and the doctor," said Ores in a recent interview at his office. "Insurance companies have insinuated themselves into the process, making hundreds of millions of dollars a year, complicating the system and serving no real purpose."

Ores has a simple procedure: "You call up and you're sick, I see you that same day. I don't make you wait three days, and it doesn't matter if you have health coverage or not. You pay whatever you can afford," he said.

He charges a flat fee of \$125, but only about 5% to 10% of his patients actually

pay the full fee.

Ores' Lower East Side neighborhood — his office is located at Clinton and Houston streets — is home to many Latino families and in close proximity to Chinatown. He sees a number of immigrants and freelancers, many of whom have little money and few viable health care options.

A graduate of Columbia Medical School in 1985, Ores started his practice about 10 years ago.

"This is not some great altruistic thing," Ores said. "I'm not trying to be Mother Teresa or something. It just makes more sense."



Dr. David Ores provides low-cost care to his Lower East Side neighbors.

(Eric Gibson/Newsday)