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## Following the vital signs: Book leads readers out of medical maze *New guide offers insider advice on medicine and health care*

**GRAND RAPIDS, Mich.** – According to a March 2008 story in *Slate*, the average doctor's visit clocks in at less than 20 minutes. When patients ask questions, they are usually interrupted in 18 seconds. So it's not surprising that most of us leave the doctor's office wondering, "What on *earth* did he just say?" It's enough to make any patient feel like just another number on a doctor's daily roster.

But in his new release, *Navigating the Medical Maze: A Practical Guide* (Brazos Press | ISBN 978-1587432071 | December 1, 2007 | \$14.99), cardiologist and medical expert Steven Brown, M.D., Ph.D. aims to make the doctor's visit a more personal one. Instead of a 20 minute visit, a scribbled prescription, and a big bill, *Navigating the Medical Maze* invites readers to step inside the doctor's office, close the door, and have a long conversation about health and medicine.

"Perhaps you or someone you love is facing a new health problem. Entering the foreign world of health care can be paralyzing," says Dr. Brown. "But rather than scare people with medical facts, it's my goal to help people find an excellent doctor, learn how to evaluate treatment choices, and get an insider's view of the critical issues in 21<sup>st</sup> century health care."

*Navigating the Medical Maze* illustrates principles of health care and medicine with personal stories, practical applications, and a spiritual worldview. The book also cites cases of medical malpractice that leave all of us vulnerable: even country music legend Merle Haggard, for example, who became a victim in 2003. In response, Dr. Brown offers tips on how we can protect ourselves against bad doctors, and recognize the signs of good ones.

### **In an interview, Dr. Brown can discuss such topics as:**

- The difference between alternative and conventional medicine – the answer may surprise you
- When to "fire" your doctor, and how to hire a great one
- Tips on evaluating medical advice with the tools doctors use themselves
- Savvy ways to make healthcare more affordable
- The "nocebo effect:" Could you be sabotaging your own medical treatment?
- The best approach for communicating with your doctor
- How to deal with the emotional impact of illness

Dr. Brown is a cardiologist with 12 years of private practice experience in west Texas, and is also a Clinical Associate Professor of Internal Medicine at Texas Tech University. He has two doctoral degrees from Columbia University, and medical papers published in *Chest*, *Circulation*, and other health journals. He lives with his wife and three children in Midland, Texas. For more information, please visit [www.drstevenbrown.org](http://www.drstevenbrown.org).

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To request an interview with Dr. Brown, please contact him through his website, [www.drstevenbrown.org](http://www.drstevenbrown.org).