



Evoke Point of View

# Millennials Demand More From Healthcare— Is the Industry Ready?



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A major disruption in the healthcare industry is coming as more millennials engage with the system. It's important to understand what makes these consumers different and find new ways to meet their needs.

Millennials, typically defined as people born between the years of 1980 and 1996, are now the largest living generation. While generalizing their mindset can be misleading, it's worth recognizing that the cohort overall has many characteristics that make these customers a challenge for healthcare marketers. They are more skeptical and suspicious of traditional authorities, prefer different sources of information versus older generations, and have unique expectations of the role of technology in delivering healthcare.

Generally, millennials demand transparency and have more distrust of doctors than previous generations. They tend to seek credible health advice online. Less than half of all millennials view doctors as their best source of medical information and, unlike older cohorts, are highly unlikely to rely on them as their sole advisor. Instead, they turn to consumer-focused solutions like Google and WebMD to educate themselves and try to solve medical issues independently.

Millennials have already started to shape the healthcare market and will continue to drive digital transformation in healthcare moving forward. However, the current industry is largely unprepared for the challenges brought on by this important group and should recognize that it cannot keep operating in a "business as usual" fashion.

## They expect more from technology and brands

As a generation of digital natives, millennials are most likely to use nontraditional ways to engage with the healthcare system. They are comfortable researching consumer decisions online, which is consistent with a generation that uses Amazon Prime more than older cohorts.

## WHO ARE THEY

Over **83 million** strong—millennials simply can't be ignored

They are trending to **spend \$1.4 trillion** by the year 2020<sup>1</sup>

In 2025, they will represent **75% of the total workforce**<sup>2</sup>

Beginning next year, they'll make the **majority of healthcare decisions**, including those as parents and caregivers<sup>2</sup>

## WHAT THEY WANT

### TRANSPARENCY AND TRUST

38% say they **trust their peers more** than medical professionals<sup>3</sup>

58% **trust their physicians, significantly less** than any cohorts surveyed<sup>3</sup>

## WHERE THEY LOOK

55% **believe online health information like WebMD** is as reliable as information from a doctor<sup>3</sup>

28% say they **would self-diagnose**<sup>4</sup>

36% say they would **treat themselves at home** before scheduling an appointment with a doctor<sup>4</sup>



User-centric services and apps like Uber, Robinhood, and Venmo have set new standards for speed, utility, and personalization. In contrast, digital technology in healthcare has thus far been limited in responding to the emerging demands of this new generation.

With millennials, the industry is facing a far more sophisticated and demanding group than their predecessors. We will need to leverage technology to align with their expectations of brands, which include immediate gratification, convenience, control and accessibility, and information transparency.

Demand	Healthcare Example	Millennials	Boomers
Immediate Gratification <sup>5</sup>	Retail care visit such as CVS	34%	17%
Convenience <sup>6</sup>	Telemedicine	40%	19%
Control & Accessibility <sup>7</sup>	Digital technology/tools	45%	14%
Information Transparency <sup>7</sup>	Research healthcare options	51%	31%

### What can we do to address their needs?

Millennials represent tremendous, unprecedented challenges. So, what can clients do to address this skeptical, tech-savvy, and demanding audience?

- Create **immediate gratification** through immersive experiences like virtual health fairs and community-based outreach programs designed to drive engagement.
- Add **convenience** when building programs that target millennials, recognizing that a hard-sell approach won't work. Treat and support them online as consumers gathering information first and not necessarily looking to drive immediate Rx conversion.
- Offer **control and accessibility** by incorporating digital technology into patient marketing initiatives like social media, podcasts, mobile apps, wearable sensors, etc.
- Demonstrate **information transparency**, adapting to the different ways millennials research and consume information. Evaluate the potential for Disease State Awareness campaigns and "holistic" content beyond just medical, as millennials trust this approach versus branded communications.
- Address the **need for credible sources** by developing interactive and video-oriented tools to help healthcare professionals better engage and build credibility with their millennial patients.

### Summary

The millennial disruption has only begun with things like telehealth and subscription medication services. However, clients must prepare for the onslaught of new demands and expectations that come with this generation. Healthcare companies will need to look for new ways to leverage digital opportunities that work better with the mindsets and habits of millennials, which may not always align with traditional models of healthcare marketing. Our industry must contest with heavy regulation and has been slow to respond thus far, but companies that manage to address the needs of millennials will have a competitive edge. As a digital-first agency, Evoke encourages our clients to take this generation into consideration as we adapt to this group—or risk being left behind.

1. US Census Bureau, 2015. 2. Thomas Jefferson University Hospitals, "Millennials: The Unforseen Generation That Will Lead Healthcare Transformation," Joseph Anton, Kristi Caldarò, March 2018. 3. MM&M, "Survey: Millennials just don't trust their doctors," November 2018. 4. c2b solutions, "How to Engage Millennial Healthcare Consumers in 2018," Brent Walker, November 2018. 5. Benefit News, Hannah Walker, November 2018. 6. PR Newswire, "Majority of Americans Ready To Consider Virtual Healthcare Visits," November 2018. 7. PR Newswire "The Millennial Patient: New Data Highlights Key Differences Between Millennials and Baby Boomer Consumers," August 2015.