

## Medical Ethics: Common or UnCommon Morality

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**The Negative Argument:** Medical Ethics and common morality are different and inconsistent on numerous critical points. Hence, common morality is **not** the ethics of medicine.

Counterexamples	Duties of Medical Ethics	Common Morality <i>versus</i> Medical Ethics
1. Look after your own interests	Act for the good of patients and society	A moral <b>ideal</b> is transformed into a <b>duty</b>
2. Make choices your own way	Guide choices with scientific evidence	A moral <b>ideal</b> is transformed into a <b>duty</b>
3. Share information	Confidentiality	<b>Permissible</b> behavior is <b>impermissible</b>
4. Judge the worth of others	Non-judgmental regard	<b>Permissible</b> behavior is <b>impermissible</b>
5. Enjoy sexual interaction	Non-sexual regard	<b>Permissible</b> behavior is <b>impermissible</b>
6. Mind your own business	Probe [with questions examination, and tests]	<b>Impermissible</b> behavior is a <b>duty</b>

**The Positive Argument:** Medical practice involves activities prohibited by common morality. An uncommon morality is needed to govern those commonly prohibited actions and interactions.

knowledge	anatomy, physiology, pathology, immunology, pharmacology, genetics, microbiology, genomics, biochemistry, & so on
powers	determine lack of decisional capacity impose treatment over objection restrain free movement allocate scarce resources collect, store, and use patient samples and data
privileges	probe (with questions, tests, examinations) examine nakedness & insides administer poisons (i.e., medicine) impose risks & burdens (e.g., surgery, chemotherapy, vaccination, studies) inflict pain
immunities	from prosecution for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ employing powers &amp; privileges</li> <li>➤ untoward outcomes</li> </ul>