ZOCDOC REPORT

# 2023

# What Patients Want

A snapshot of patient preferences, behaviors and sentiments in 2023

Zocdoc

# Contents



Zocdoc

# Zocdoc was founded in 2007 with a mission to give power to the patient.

Today, as America's leading healthcare marketplace, Zocdoc aims to help every patient find and book every type of care.

Through Zocdoc, patients can schedule appointments with **nearly 100,000 healthcare providers** – from solo practitioners to those employed by independent medical groups or large hospitals and health systems. These providers collectively represent 250 different specialties, accept more than 18,000 distinct insurance plans, and are located across all 50 states. Most offer in-person care, some offer virtual care, and many offer both.

We are broadening and deepening these offerings each day. **In 2023, we grew our supply of providers on the marketplace by more than 40 percent year over year.** We have also expanded to offer new care types like urgent care, Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs), and perinatal care.

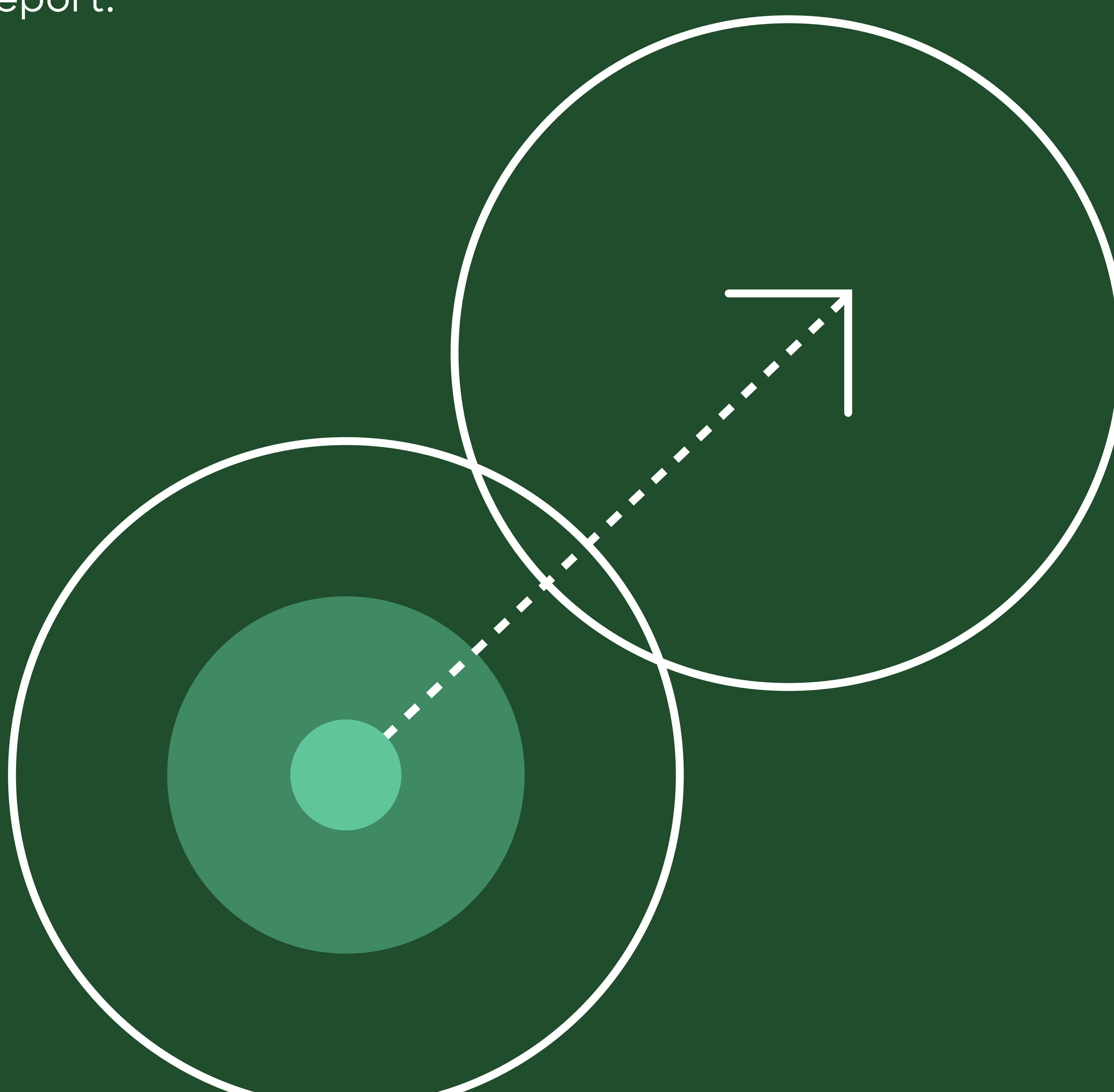
Each month, millions of people visit Zocdoc.com or use our free mobile app to search for quality healthcare providers. **This means that every minute, patients are telling us with their clicks what they want when it comes to their care.** While some might think of patients as a monolith, we know that each search and each booking represents a different need, a different priority, a different desire.

At Zocdoc, we have the privilege of receiving this feedback from patients each day. Our 2023 What Patients Want Report is the first time we are sharing these insights with the world at large. **The following is a snapshot of the key trends and insights in 2023 when it comes to what patients want.**

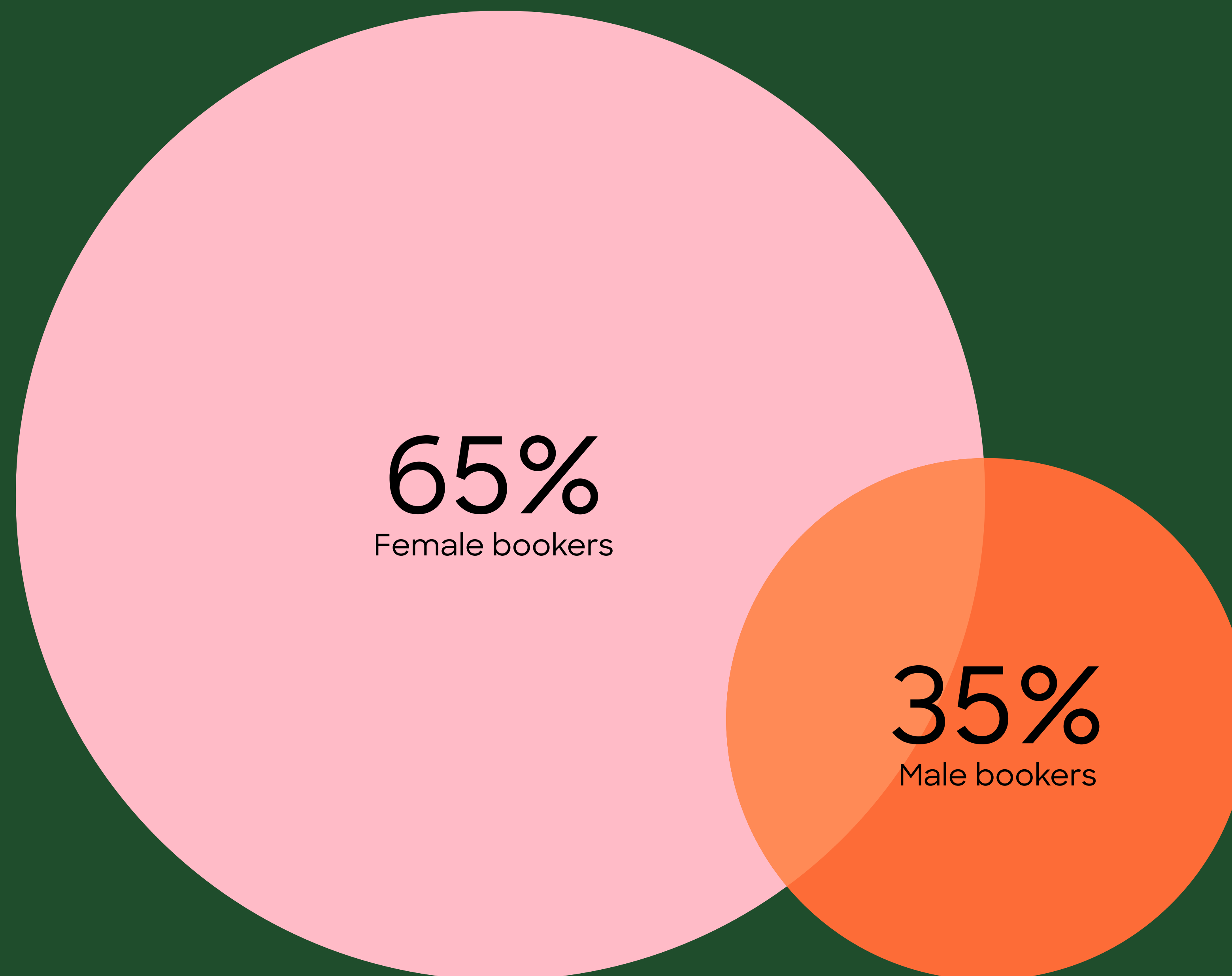
SECTION 1

# Who is accessing care?

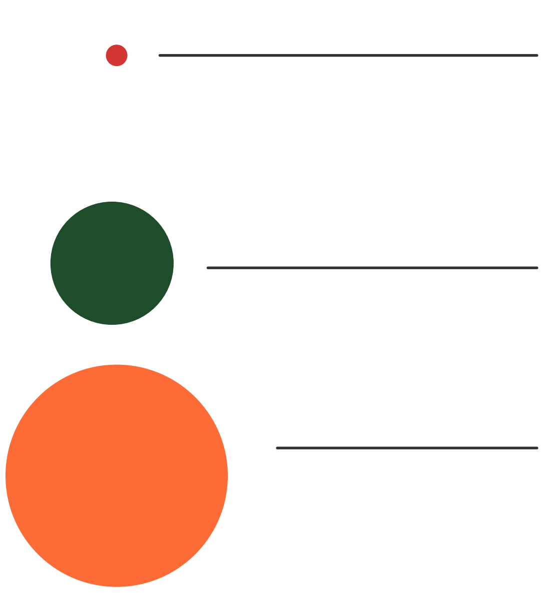
Before diving into what patients want, let's look at an overview of the bookers who are driving the insights within this report.



## Users booked appointments in all 50 states, and roughly 2 in 3 Zocdoc bookers were women




## Nearly half of all bookers were Millennials



4%
< 18

22%
Gen Z (18 – 26)

48%
Millennials (27 – 42)

16%
Gen X (43 – 58)

10%
Baby Boomers & up (59+)

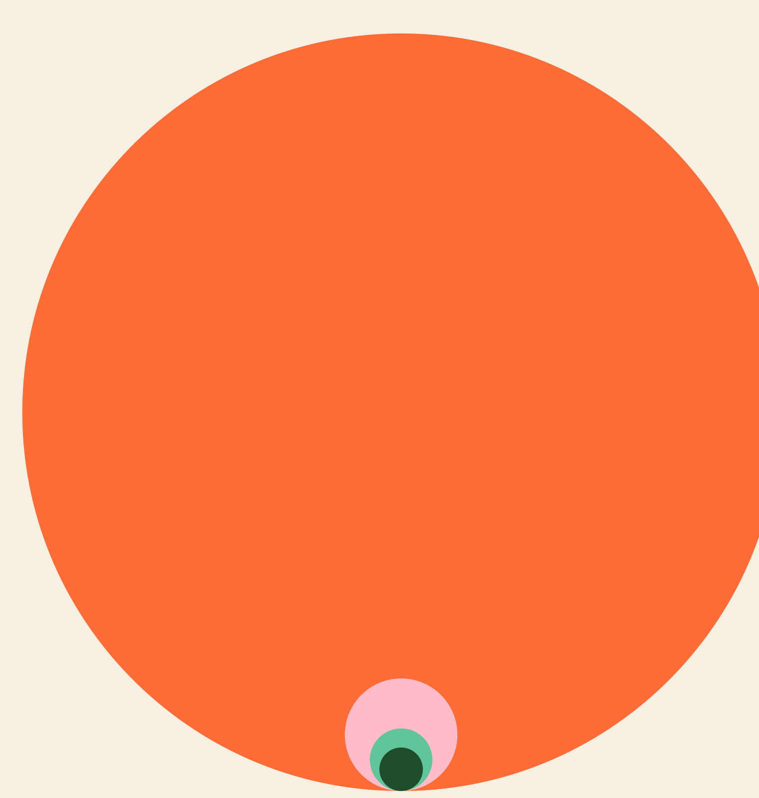
## More than 4 in 5 bookings were made using a commercial insurance

82%
Commercial

9%
Medicaid

5%
Medicare

4%
Self-pay



# Female patients were slightly more active* than male patients, booking **6% more appointments.**

While women in every age group were more proactive bookers than their male counterparts, the gap closed as patients age.

*Defined as bookings made per booker.

- Relative to Gen Z men, Gen Z women booked **9% more appointments** on average.
- Relative to Millennial men, Millennial women booked **6% more appointments** on average.
- Gen X women booked **2% more** than Gen X men.
- Baby Boomers and older had the smallest discrepancy (**1% difference**).

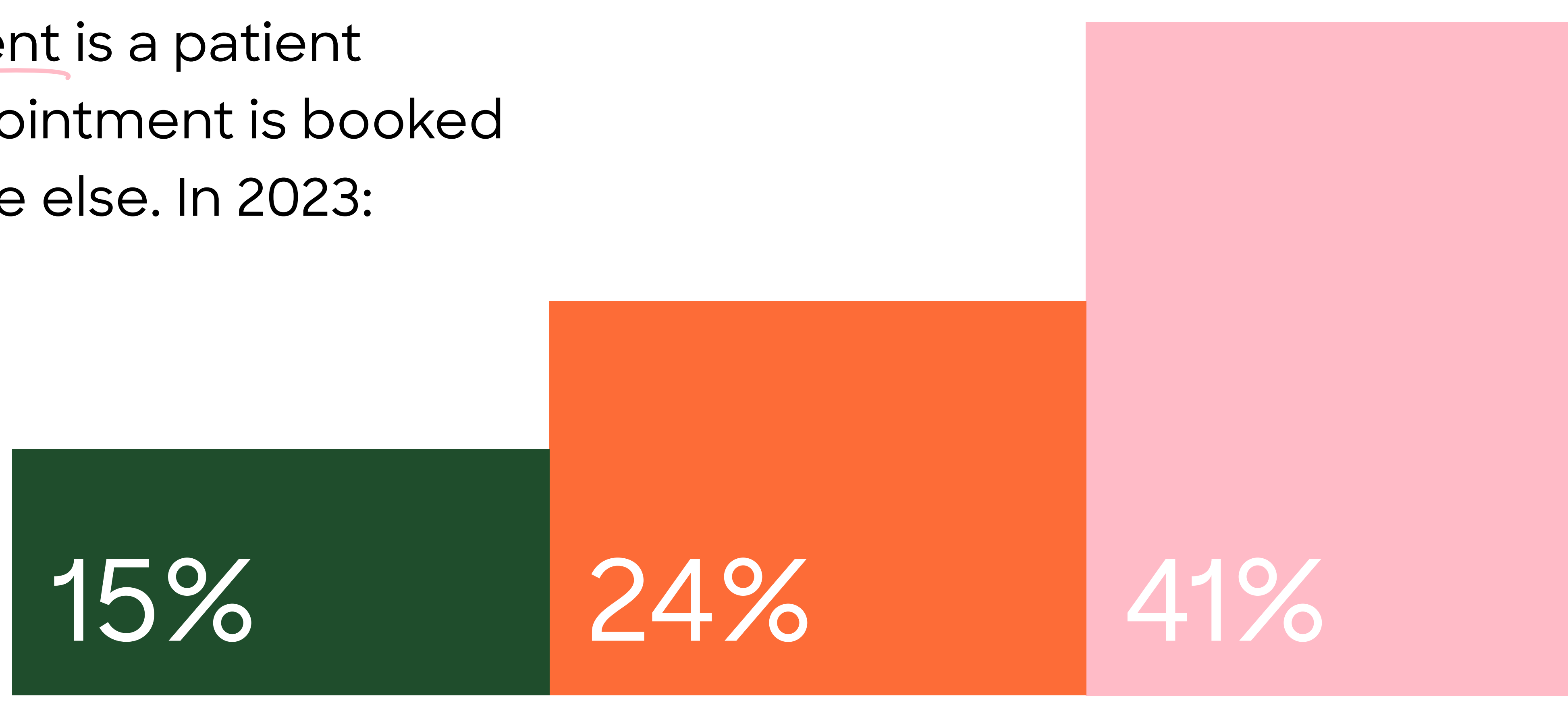
A sub-patient is a patient whose appointment is booked by someone else. In 2023:

56%

of sub-patients were female

44%

of sub-patients were male



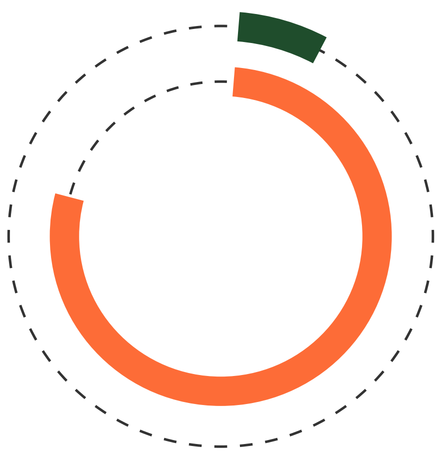

Gen Z represented a relatively small share of sub-patient bookings.

Millennials represented about one-quarter.

Minors made up the largest share of sub-patients.

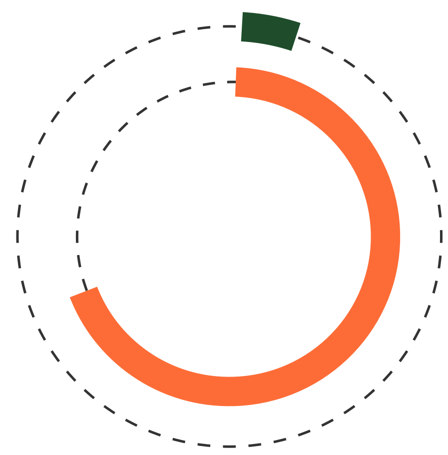
## A sub-patient booker is the person who is booking the appointment on behalf of someone else

Women booked a disproportionate number of sub-patient appointments:



9%
of all male bookings were made by someone else

80%
of those were made by a woman

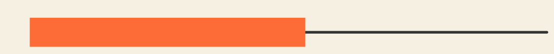


6%
of all female bookings were made by someone else

72%
of those were made by a woman

## Millennial women did the most appointment management on behalf of others

The largest group of sub-patient bookers were Millennials, who made up half of all sub-patient bookings

49% 

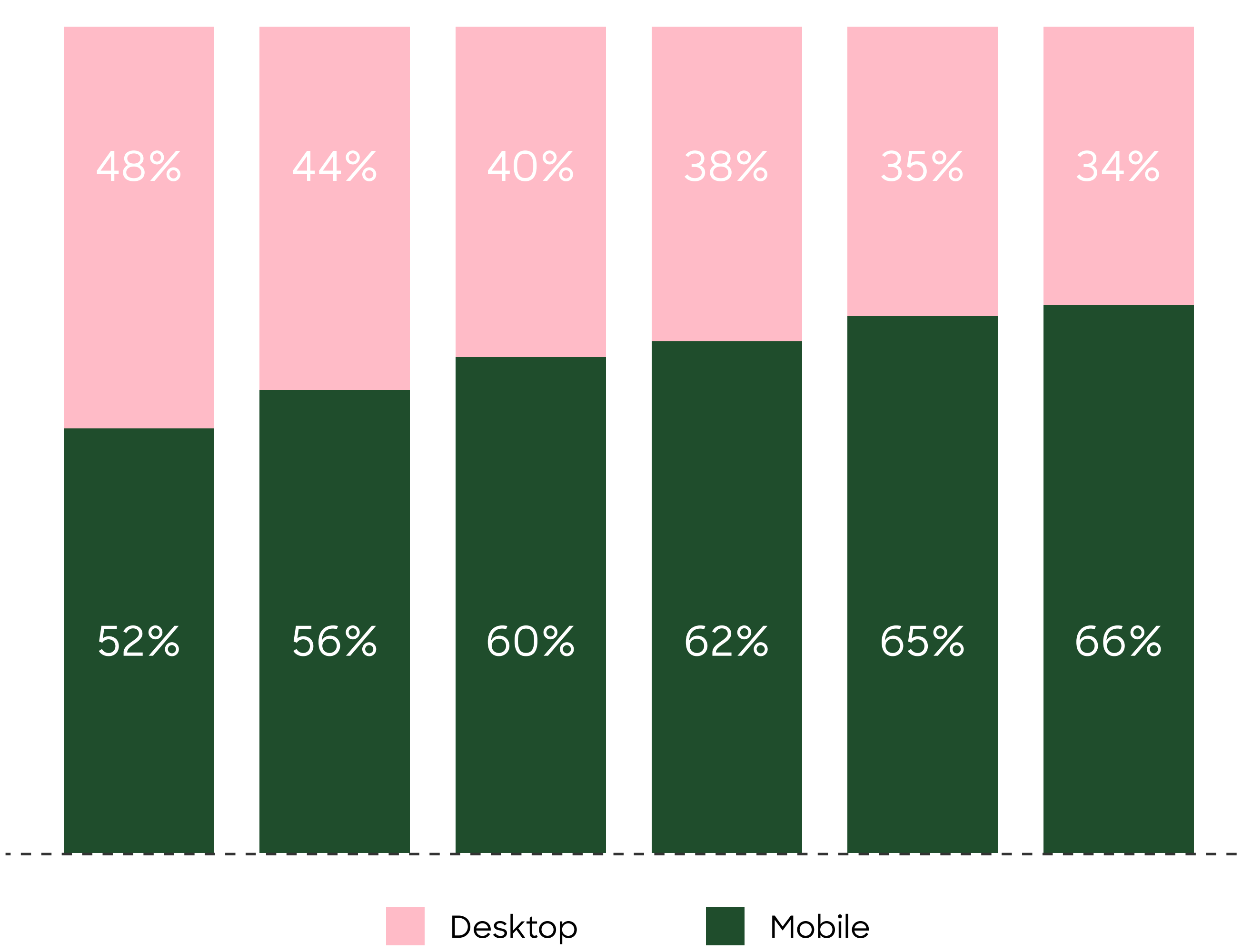
1 in 5 of those sub-patient bookings were made for fellow Millennials, while 22% were made for minors

20% 

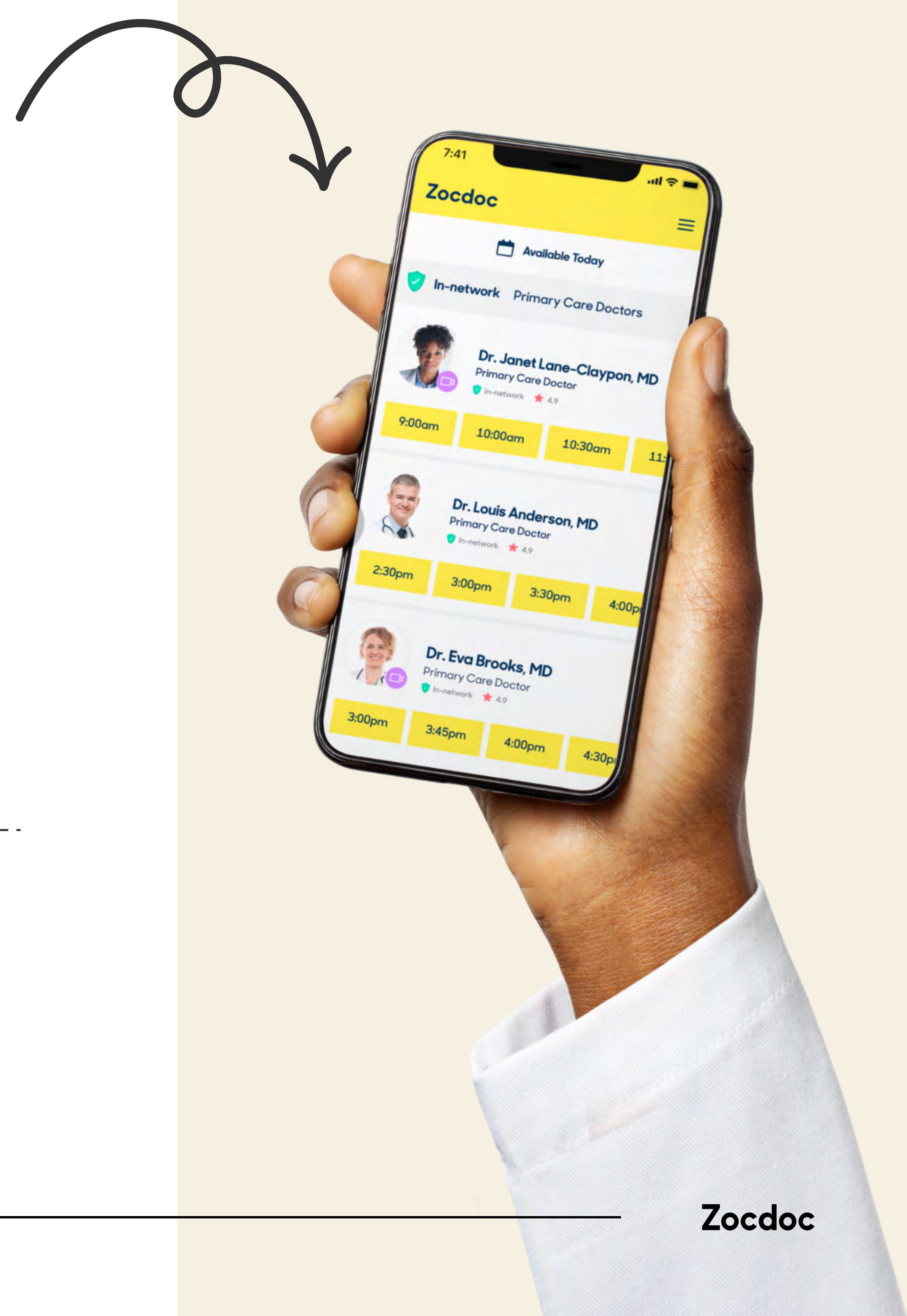
Half of all sub-patient bookings made by women were made by Millennial women

50% 

Appointments are increasingly booked via mobile device, reaching new highs in 2023



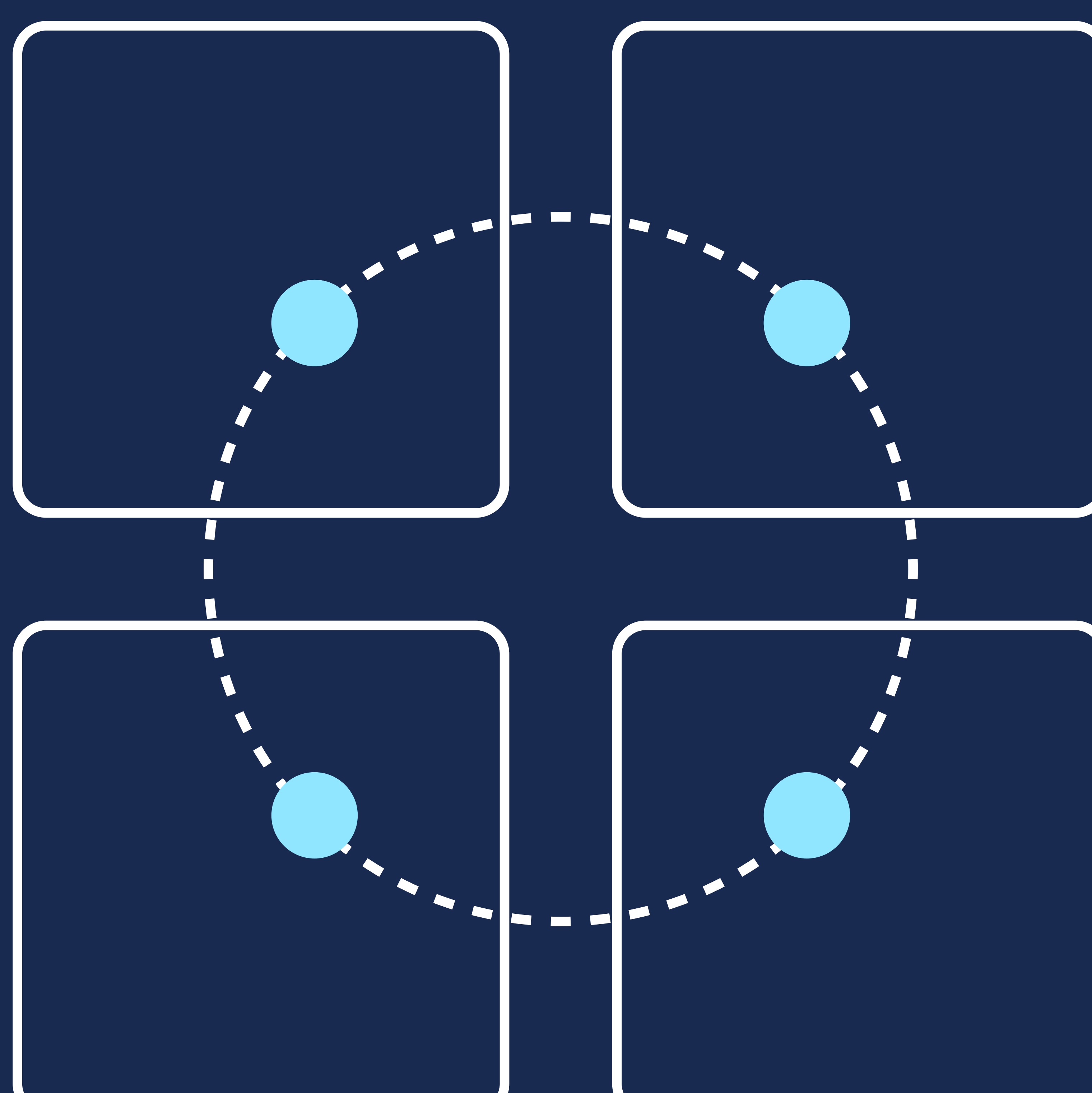

Mobile users booked **20% more appointments** than desktop users



SECTION 2

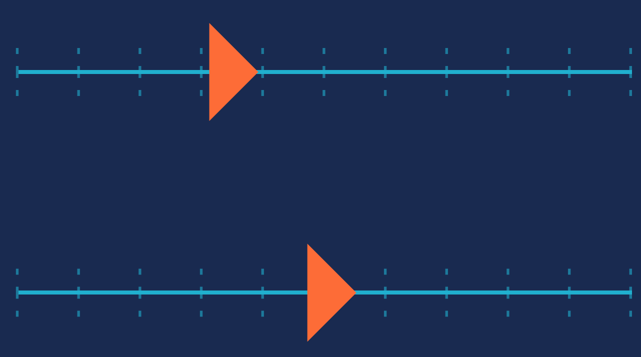
# What characteristics matter most to patients?

Patients are discerning. They looked at an average of **26 provider options before booking.**

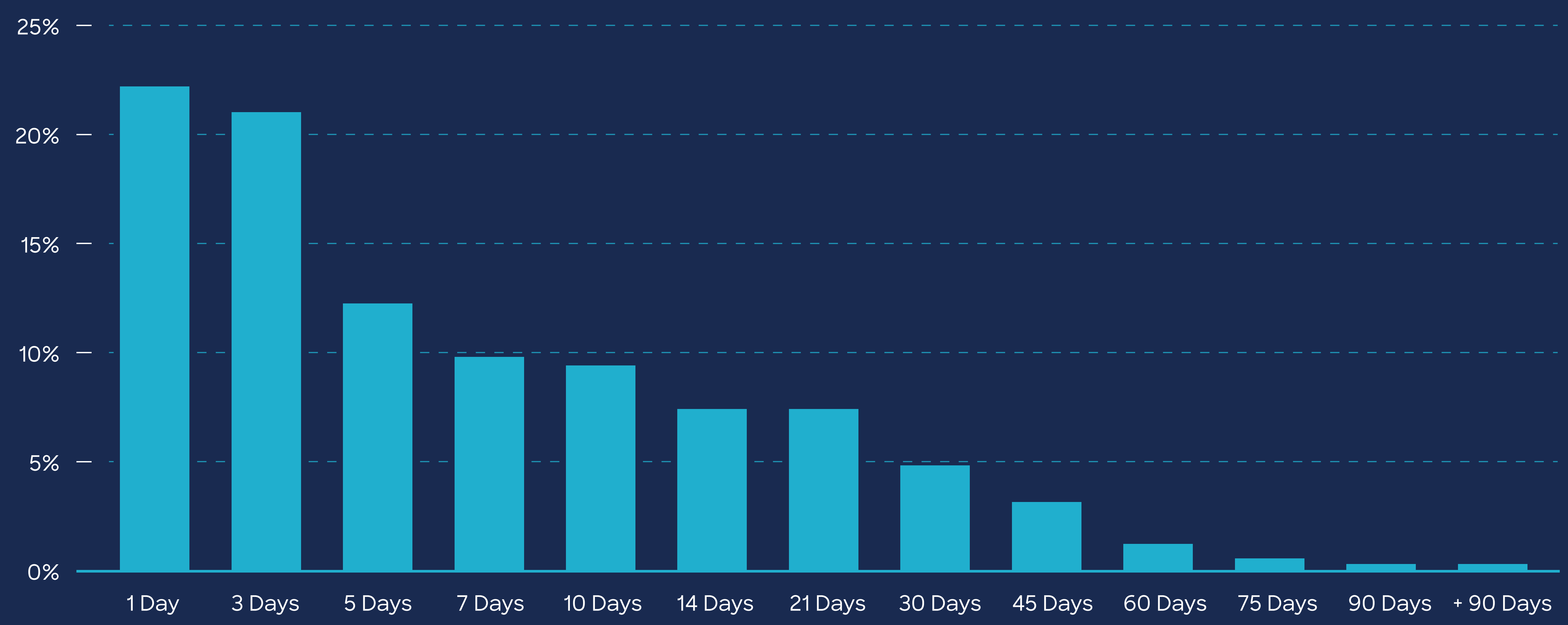


# Speed to care

Nearly 1 in 3 appointments took place within **48 hours of booking** and nearly half of all appointments on Zocdoc took place within **four days**, showing a strong preference for near-term appointments.



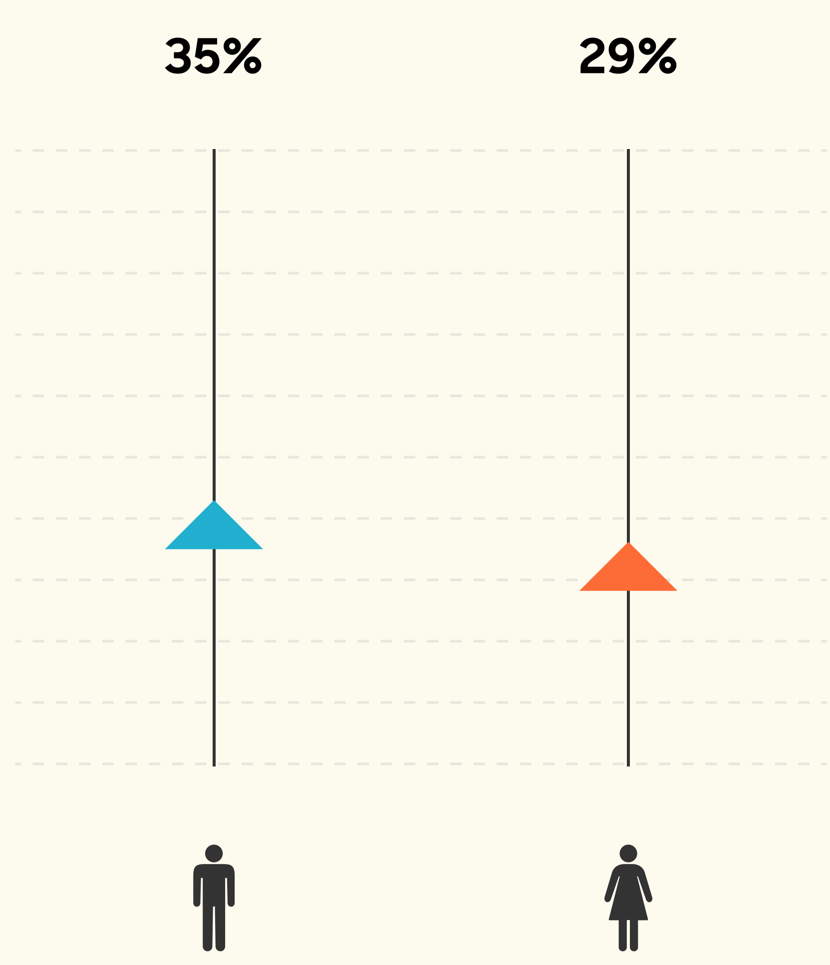

DISTRIBUTION OF APPOINTMENTS BASED ON TIME BETWEEN THE BOOKING AND THE VISIT




## Preference for near-term bookings held true across all demographics. However:

Baby Boomers and older saw a little less urgency for same-day visits relative to younger generations.

Men more strongly preferred near-term bookings, with **35%** happening within 48 hours vs. **29%** for women.




% OF VISITS WITHIN 48 HOURS OF BOOKING

Patients in Houston, Dallas and New York were most likely to book appointments in the very near term.

- **Dallas had a 25%** higher share of within-a-day appointments than the average.
- **Houston saw a 21%** higher share, while **New York saw 8%** higher.

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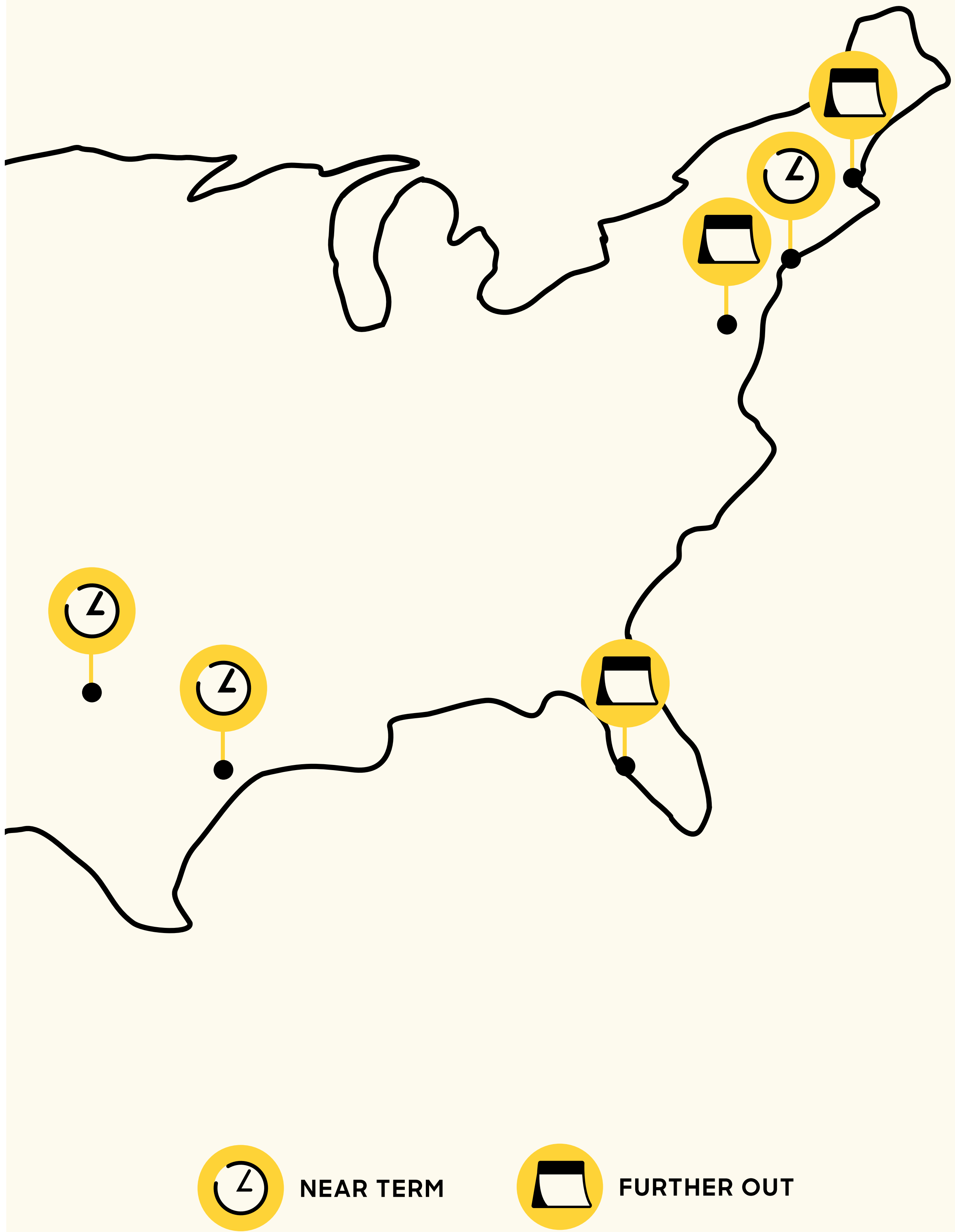
Patients in Boston, Tampa and Philadelphia tended to book further out.

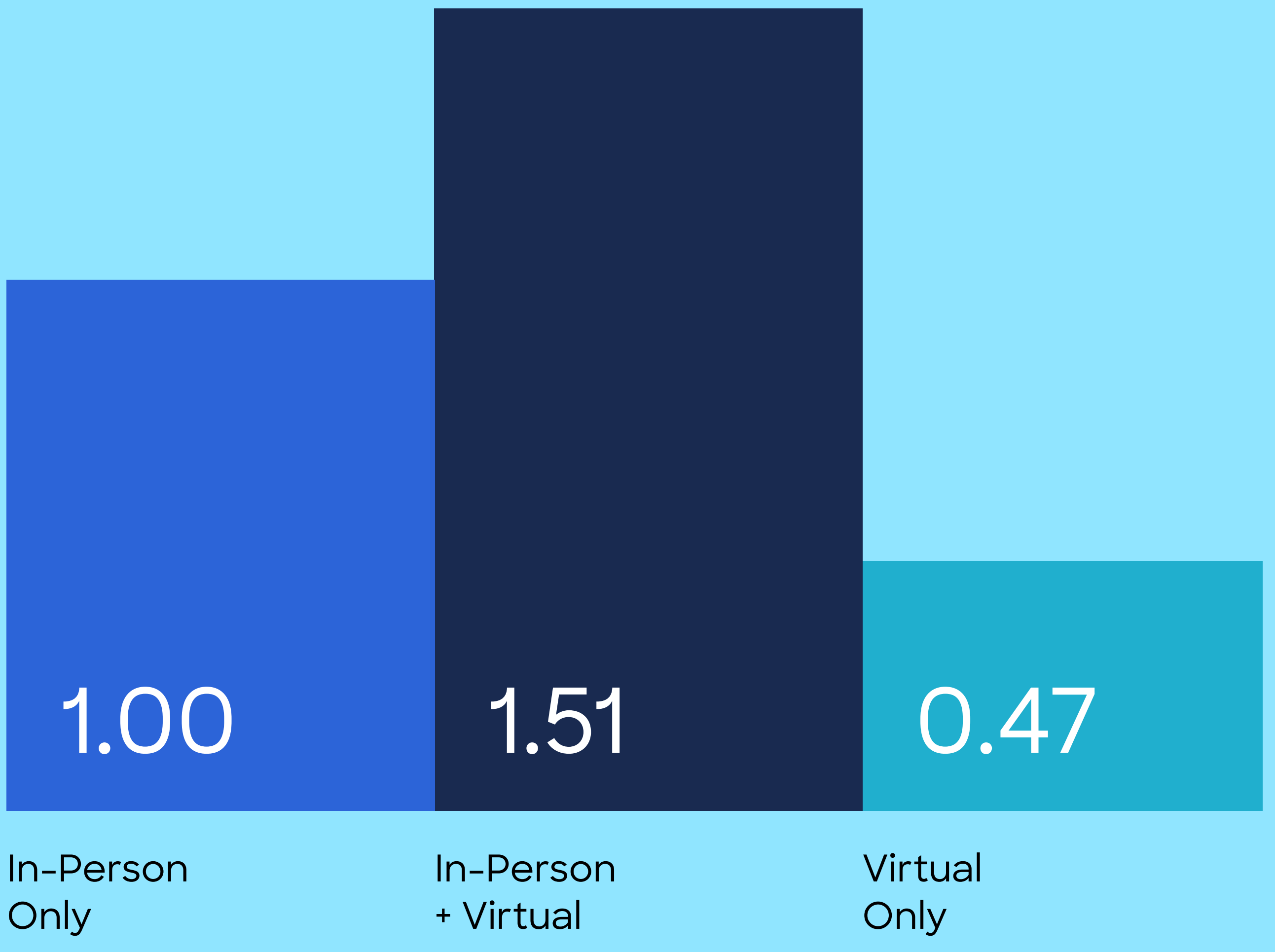
- **Boston patients booked 50% below** the average share of appointments that happened within 24 hours.
- Boston's share of bookings for eight or more days out was **49% higher** than the average. **Tampa was 46%** higher, while **Philadelphia was 31%** higher.




## Virtual vs. in-person care offerings

Providers* who offered both virtual and in-person visits received **51% more bookings** than those that offered in-person only and **217% more** than virtual-only providers

(*Excluding mental health providers)

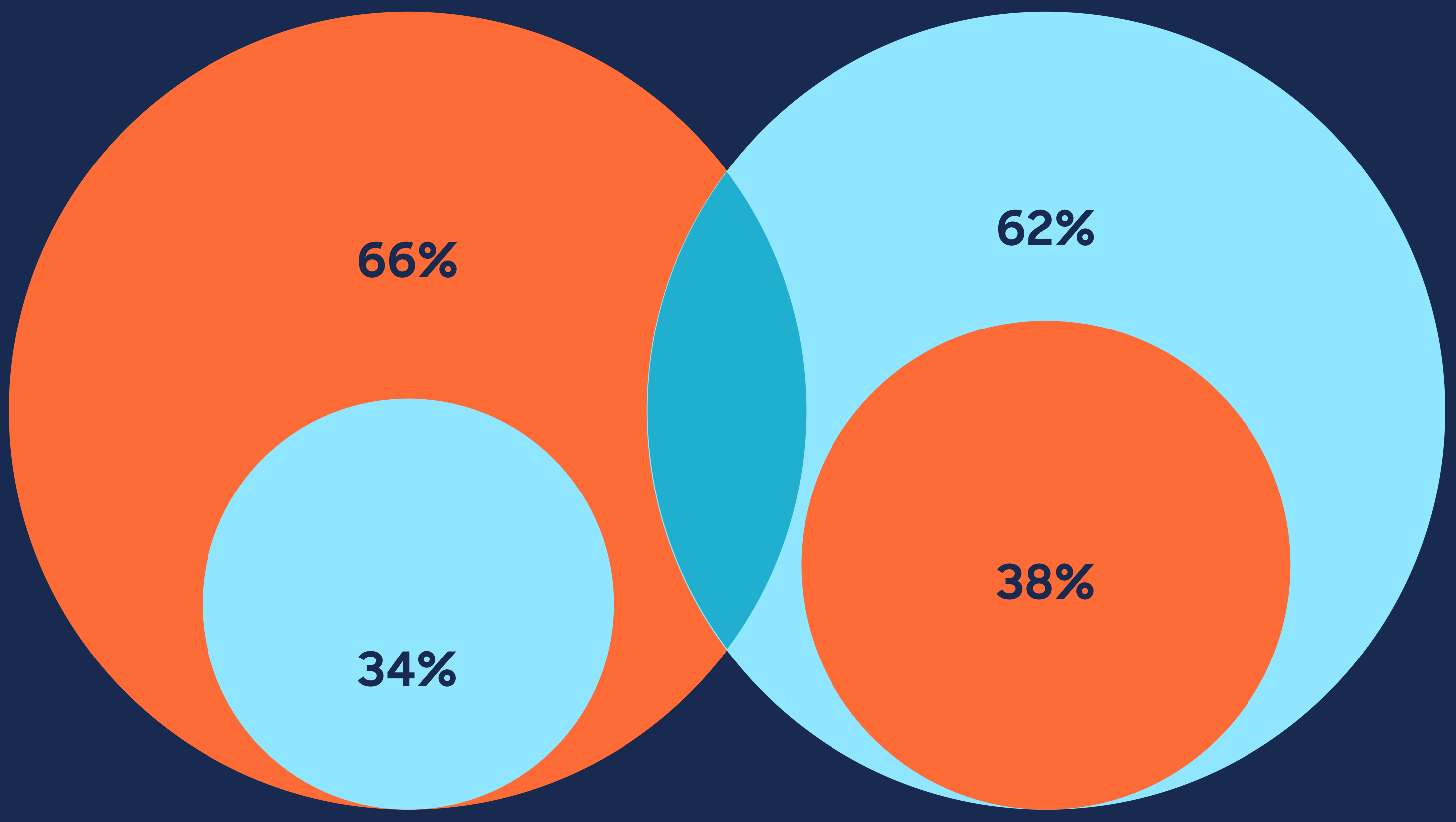


# Gender of provider

On Zocdoc's marketplace, **66%** of participating providers identify as female and **34%** identify as male, closely mirroring Zocdoc's patient user demographics.

Meanwhile, America's general population of practicing physicians is nearly the inverse*, where **38%** are female and **62%** male.

*Link to data




POPULATION OF PROVIDERS ON ZOCDOC'S MARKETPLACE

GENERAL POPULATION OF PRACTICING PHYSICIANS

## Patients preferred providers of their own sex

Overall, 57% of bookings were made with female providers and 43% were made with male providers

65%
of female patient bookings were with female providers

59%
of male patient bookings were with male providers

However, as patients age, all tended to prefer male providers.

**Female** ob-gyns, gastroenterologists and cardiologists received more bookings on average than their male colleagues.

+40% Ob-gyns

+30% Gastroenterologists

+30% Cardiologists

**Male** orthopedic surgeons, urologists and ENTs received more bookings on average than their female colleagues.

+80% Orthopedic surgeons

+60% Urologists

+60% ENTs

Notably, **male mental health professionals** received an average of 35% more bookings than female providers.

This held true even though there are roughly 4x the number of female mental health professionals on Zocdoc than male, and 2 in 3 mental health bookings are made for female patients.

+35% Mental health professionals

# Provider profile spotlight

## Hospital affiliation

Providers who had a hospital affiliation noted on their profile received **3x as many bookings** on average compared to other providers in their specialty that did not.

**% MORE BOOKINGS FOR PROVIDERS WHO NOTE HOSPITAL AFFILIATIONS VS. THOSE WHO DON'T (WITHIN SAME SPECIALTY)**


## More photos, more bookings

Providers with one to three office photos received **2.8x as many bookings** on average vs. providers with no office photos, and providers with four or more office photos received **4.8x as many bookings.**

## More languages, more bookings

Providers who listed **two languages on their profile got nearly 2x as many bookings,** and providers who listed **three or more languages got 3x as many bookings.**

Above three languages*, for every additional language a provider listed, they **received another 20% more bookings.**

*Up to 6 languages

## More reviews, more bookings

Patients strongly preferred providers with more than 50 reviews; those providers received **11x more bookings** than providers with 1 – 9 reviews.

Providers with more than 100 reviews got more than **30x as many bookings** than providers with 1 – 9 reviews.

When it came to numerical ratings, patients scored their providers favorably on a five-point scale.

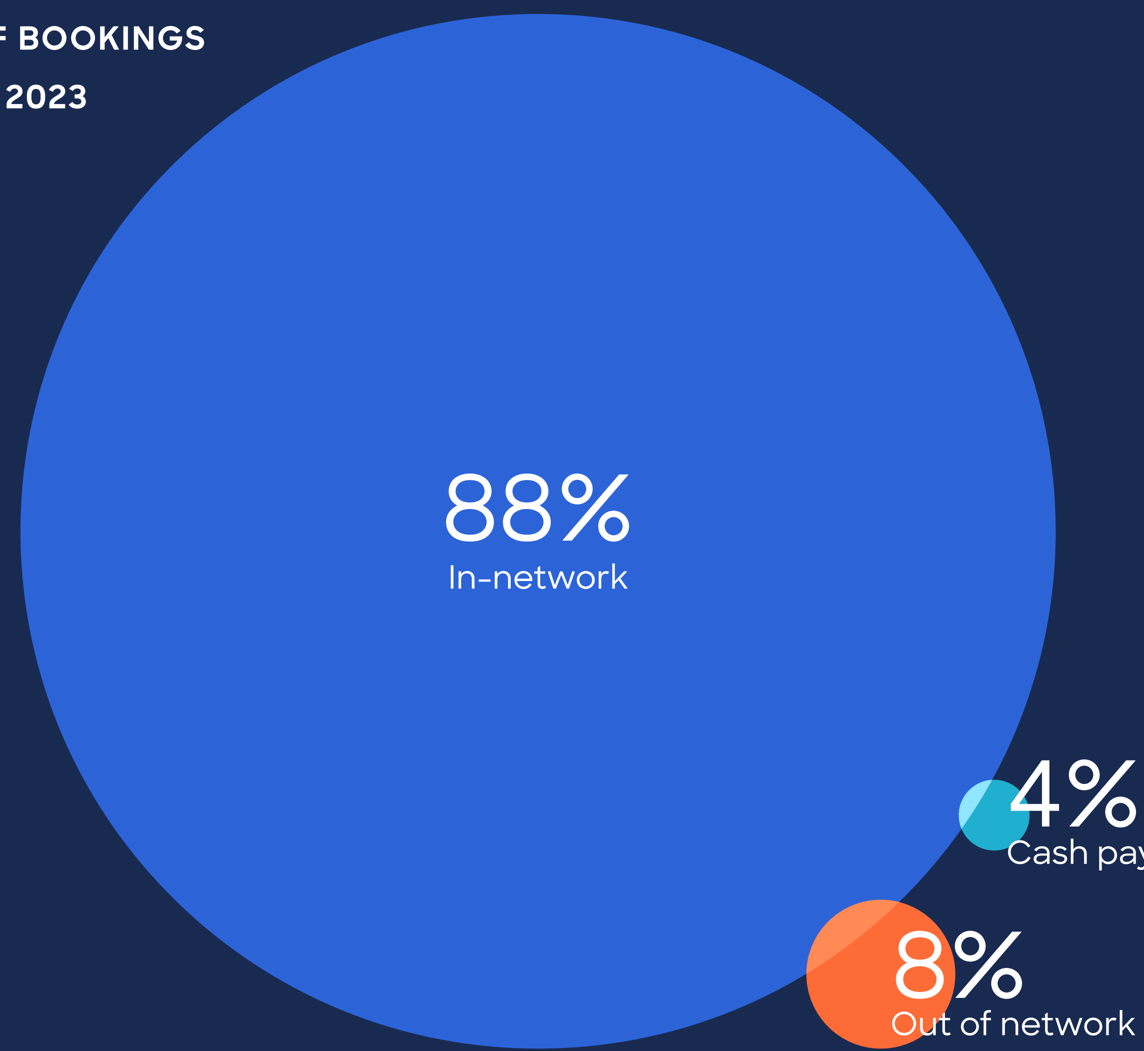
Average Overall rating: **4.79**

Average Bedside Manner rating: **4.83**

Average Wait Time rating: **4.69**

# Insurance status

PAYOR STATUS OF BOOKINGS IN 2023




## Top 10 out-of-network visit reasons

When patients chose to go out of network, it was largely for cosmetic procedures, mental health and dental care.

| VISIT REASON | % OUT OF NETWORK |
|---|---|
| 01. COVID-19 Testing | 34% |
| 02. Psychiatry Follow-Up | 28% |
| 03. Filler Treatment | 22% |
| 04. Plastic Surgery Consultation | 22% |
| 05. Botox Treatment | 21% |
| 06. Pediatric Dentist Consultation | 21% |
| 07. Acupuncture | 17% |
| 08. Dentures | 16% |
| 09. Elbow Problems | 16% |
| 10. Laser Skin Treatment | 15% |

## Top 10 self-pay visit reasons

Similarly, when patients paid out of pocket, it was largely for dental care and cosmetic visit reasons.

| VISIT REASON | % SELF PAY |
|---|---|
| 01. Immigration Medical Examination | 34% |
| 02. Filler Treatment | 26% |
| 03. Botox Treatment | 23% |
| 04. Teeth Whitening | 16% |
| 05. Braces Consultation | 15% |
| 06. Laser Skin Treatment | 14% |
| 07. Medical Clearance | 12% |
| 08. Dental Pain Emergency Visit | 12% |
| 09. Nexplanon Removal | 12% |
| 10. Orthodontic Consultation | 12% |

## Specialists with most in-network bookings

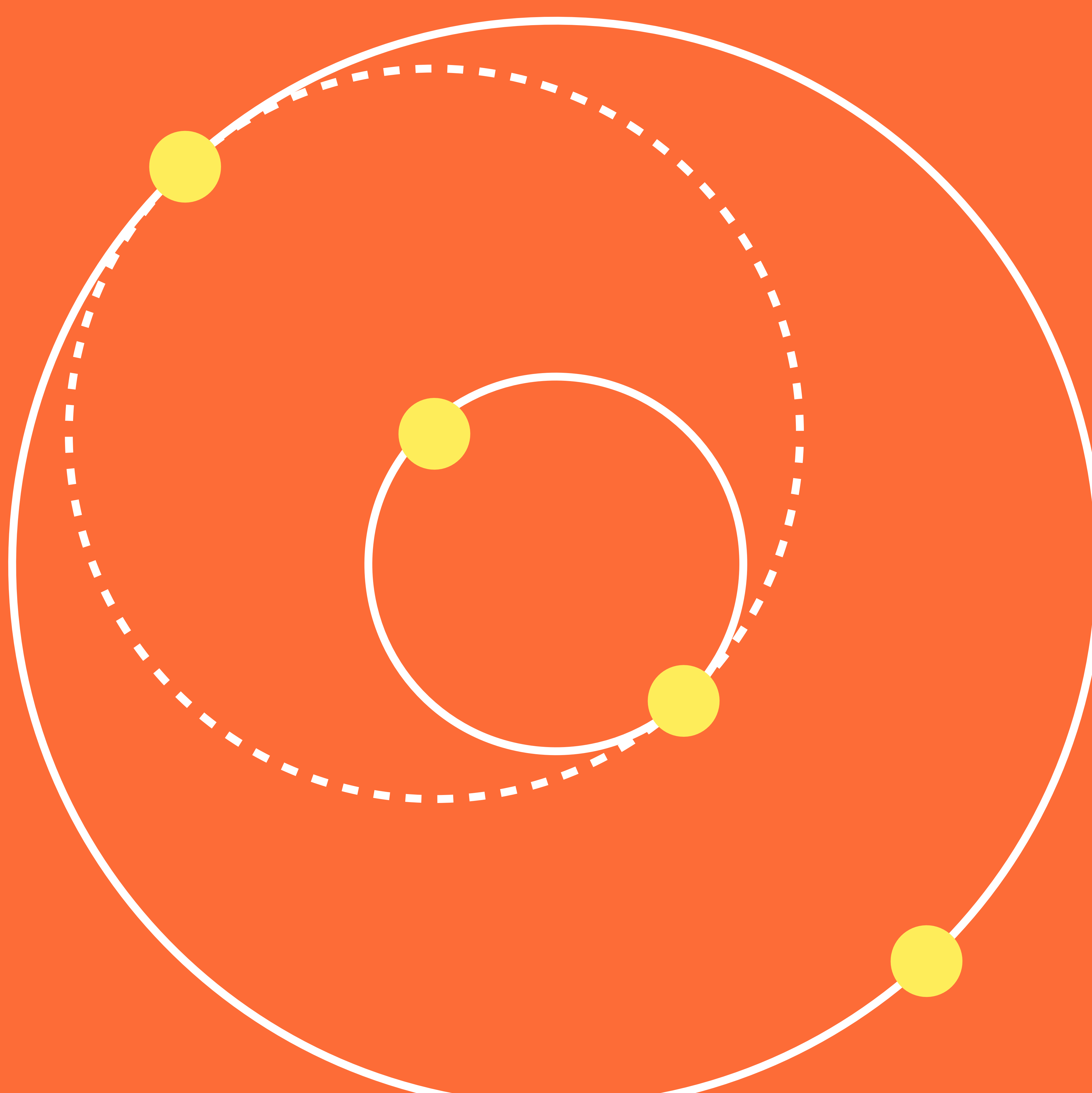
| | |
|---|---|
| Pulmonologist | 94% |
| Dietitian | 94% |
| Nutritionist | 94% |
| Gastroenterologist | 94% |
| Colorectal Surgeon | 93% |
| Sports Medicine Specialist | 93% |
| Endocrinologist | 93% |
| Bariatric Surgeon | 92% |
| PCP | 91% |
| Cardiologist | 91% |

## Specialists with most out-of-network bookings

| | |
|---|---|
| Plastic Surgeon | 23% |
| Anesthesiologist | 14% |
| Reproductive Endocrinologist | 13% |
| Surgeon | 13% |
| Chiropractor | 12% |
| Pediatric Subspecialty | 12% |
| Pain Management Specialist | 12% |
| Oncologist | 11% |
| Internist | 11% |
| Psychologist | 11% |

SECTION 3

# Why are patients seeking care?



# Top 10 visit reasons booked in 2023

Preventive health, mental health and dental health topped the bookings charts in 2023. The annual physical was the most-booked visit reason overall in 2023, representing the top visit reason for men, and no. 2 for women, behind an annual Pap smear.

01. Annual Physical
02. Annual Pap Smear / Gyn Exam
03. Illness
04. Dermatology Consultation
05. Dental Cleaning
06. Dental Consultation
07. Anxiety
08. Psychiatry Consultation
09. Hyperactive Disorder (ADD / ADHD)
10. New Patient Visit (typically PCP)

# Top specialists booked in 2023

- Primary care doctor
- Dermatologist
- Ob-gyn
- Dentist
- Psychiatrist
- Psychologist
- Optometrist
- Podiatrist
- Orthopedic surgeon
- Chiropractor
- Ear, nose & throat doctor

## Female-skewing specialties and visit reasons

Relative to the 2023 average, women made a disproportionate share of bookings for plastic surgeons (83% female), dieticians (80% female), and nutritionists (78% female).

**Overall, these were the top 10 visit reasons disproportionately booked by women:**

| BOOKINGS MADE BY WOMEN | % |
|---|---|
| **01.** Infertility Consultation | **92%** |
| **02.** Botox Treatment | **92%** |
| **03.** Urinary Tract Infection (UTI) | **90%** |
| **04.** Eating Disorder | **89%** |
| **05.** Hypothyroidism / Underactive Thyroid | **88%** |
| **06.** Obesity / Weight Loss Consultation | **87%** |
| **07.** Ozempic / Wegovy (Semaglutide) Consultation | **86%** |
| **08.** Hyperpigmentation | **86%** |
| **09.** Weight Management | **85%** |
| **10.** Thyroid Evaluation | **85%** |

## Male-skewing specialties and visit reasons

Men disproportionately went to the audiologist (40% more), cardiologist (40% more), and orthopedic surgeon (40% more) as compared to the average. They also booked urologist appointments 140% more than the average.

**These were the top 10 bookings most disproportionately booked by men:**

| BOOKINGS MADE BY MEN | % |
|---|---|
| **01.** Gout | **90%** |
| **02.** Genital Warts | **80%** |
| **03.** Hernia | **71%** |
| **04.** Obstructive Sleep Apnea (OSA) | **70%** |
| **05.** Anger Management | **60%** |
| **06.** Sports Injury | **58%** |
| **07.** Orthopedic Consultation (Arm & Elbow) | **57%** |
| **08.** Orthopedic Consultation (Shoulder) | **55%** |
| **09.** Addiction / Substance Abuse | **55%** |
| **10.** Hand Injury | **54%** |

Relative to the average bookings mix by age, adult **Gen Z patients made up a 30% higher** share of mental health bookings.

Mental health bookings were **significantly lower for the 59+** set (between 40% and 50% lower share as compared to the average).

While anecdotes assert that young adults rely on urgent care the most, data showed that **adults booked urgent care visits consistently** across all generations.

Similarly, 2023 bookings did not show that young adults are less likely to have a primary care provider. **PCP bookings were consistent across all generations,** except with Baby Boomers, who booked 10% fewer PCP appointments than the overall average.

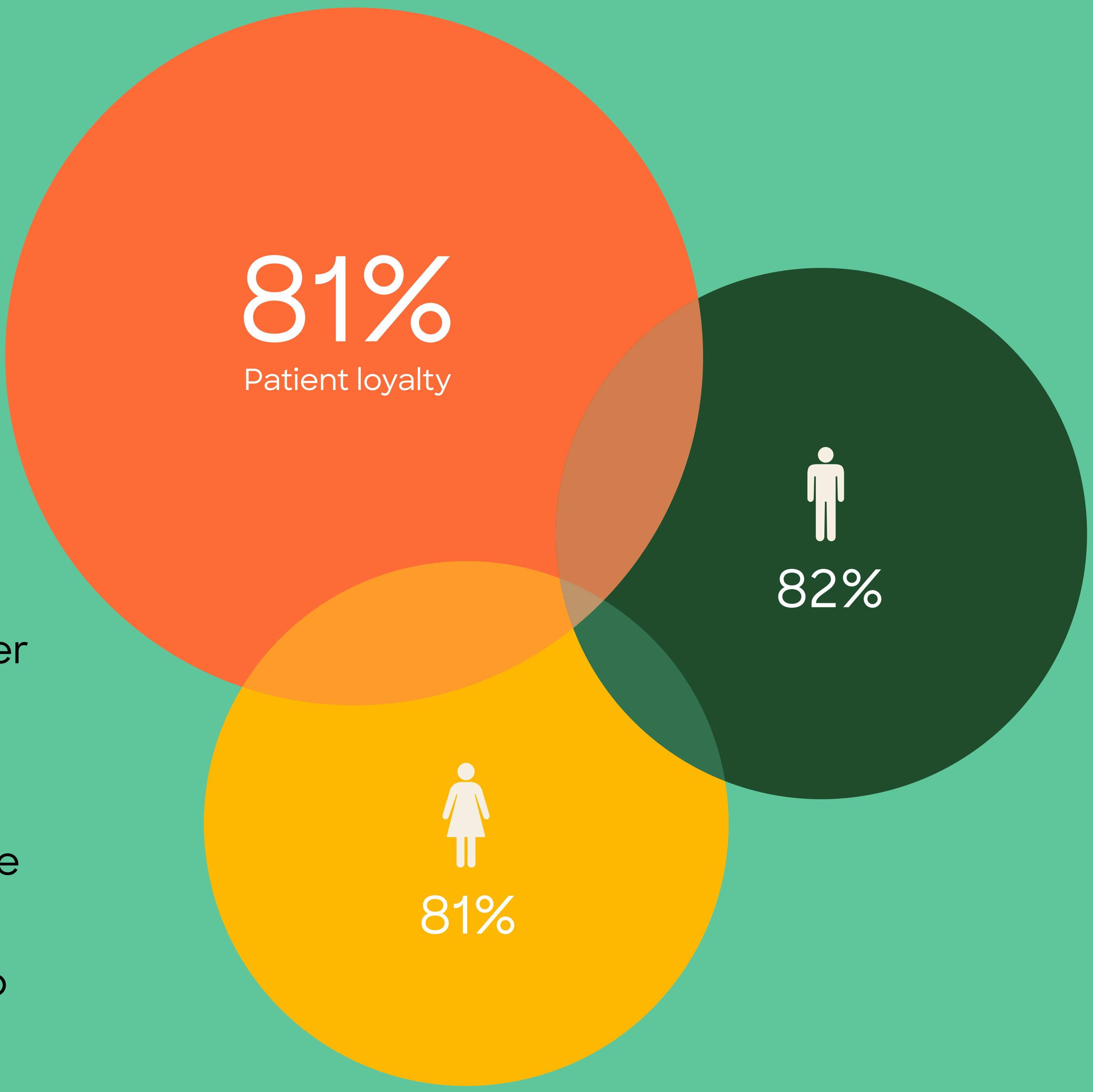
Meanwhile, neurology, ENT, cardiology, podiatry, ophthalmology, and orthopedic bookings skewed older, with **Baby Boomers and older most heavily booking these specialties.**

# Patients were broadly loyal to their providers...

...with roughly 4 in 5 patients rebooking* with the same provider when booking in the same specialty.

Male and female patients were equally loyal to their providers, rebooking the same provider when rebooking in the same specialty.

Across all generations, provider loyalty was high, though older patients were slightly more loyal than younger patients. Data showed that that Gen X patients and older were up to 6% more loyal more loyal than Gen Z and Millennial patients.




* Rebooking rate represents patients who had a new patient visit in 2023 and made a subsequent appointment with the same provider when rebooking in the same specialty in 2023.

## Allergists, chiropractors and ENTs were the specialties with the most loyal* patients.

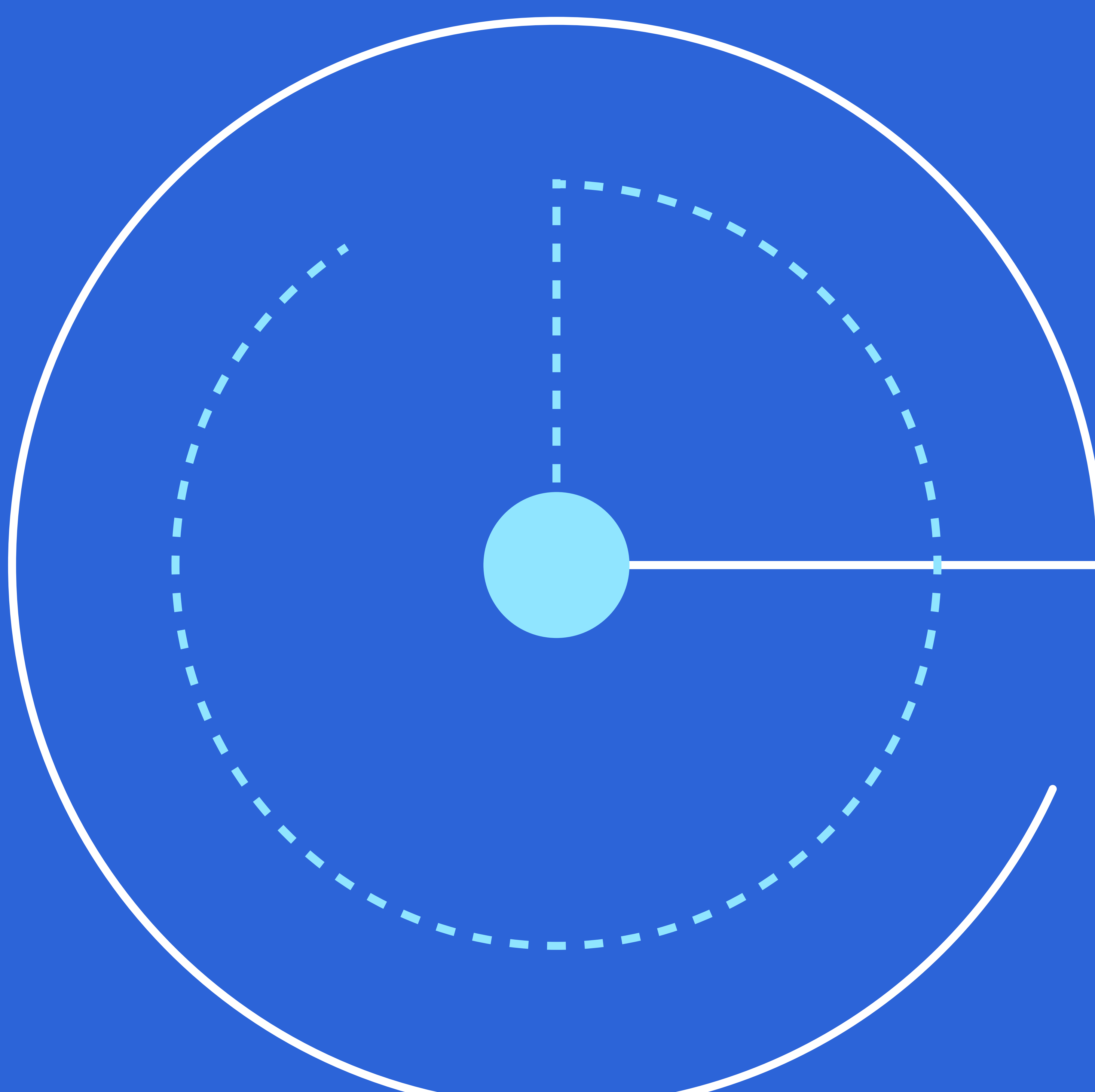
*% of patients who rebooked with the same provider when rebooking in the same specialty in 2023

### Top specialists with the most loyal patients:

| | SPECIALIST | REBOOKING % | % REBOOKING ABOVE AVERAGE |
|---|---|---|---|
| 01. | Allergist | 93% | 14% |
| 02. | Chiropractor | 90% | 11% |
| 03. | Ear, nose & throat doctor | 89% | 10% |
| 04. | Podiatrist | 88% | 9% |
| 05. | Gastroenterologist | 87% | 8% |
| 06. | Ophthalmologist | 87% | 7% |
| 07. | Psychologist | 87% | 7% |
| 08. | Optometrist | 86% | 7% |
| 09. | Pediatrician | 86% | 6% |
| 10. | Physical therapist | 86% | 6% |
| 11. | Cardiologist | 86% | 6% |

SECTION 4

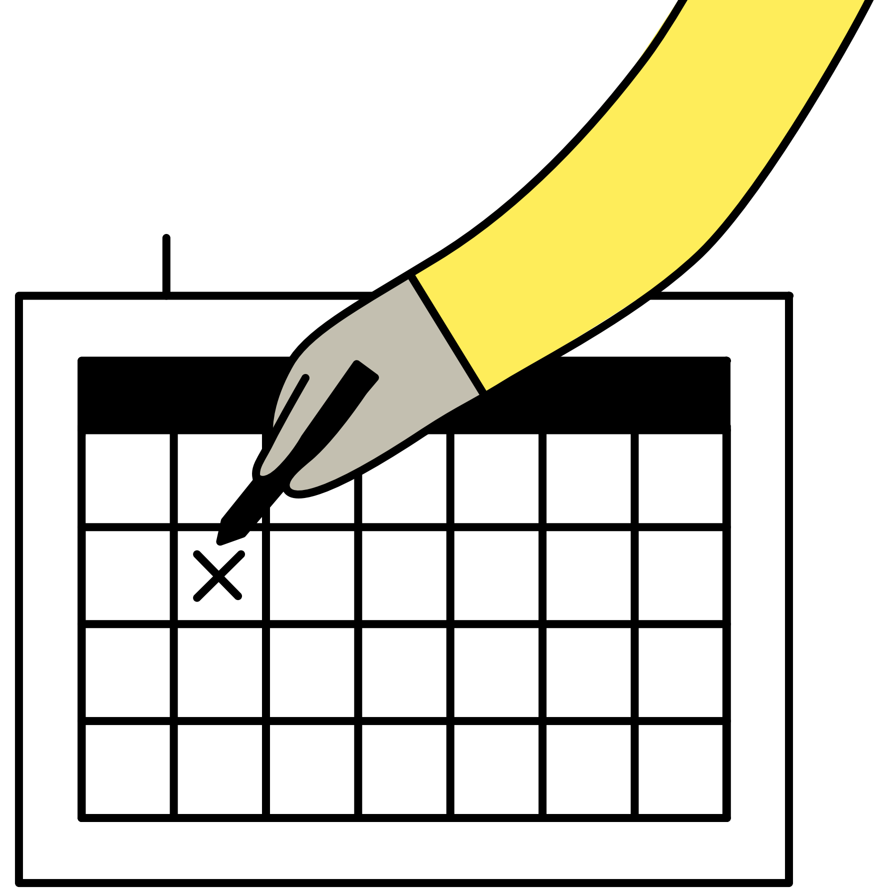
# When do patients want to see the doctor?



## Busiest booking day of 2023:
## Tuesday, January 3

**Patients booked 41% more appointments on January 3** — the first non-holiday weekday of the New Year — than the average number of bookings made on Tuesdays in 2023.

Annual Physical, Pap Smear, Illness and Dermatology Consultation were among the top-booked visit reasons that day.



+13%

### Busiest appointment day of 2023:
### Monday, January 30

This was the day of the year with the most appointments, with **13% more appointments** scheduled for this day vs. the average Monday in 2023.

-70%

### Least busy appointment day of 2023
### Sunday, January 1

New Year's Day had nearly **70% fewer appointments** than the average Sunday in 2023.

+10%

### Busiest appointment week of 2023
### The week of January 9

Patients started off the New Year on a healthy foot, with the week of January 9 emerging as the busiest appointment week of the year. There were **10% more appointments** scheduled for that week vs. the average week.

-20%

### Least busy appointment week of 2023
### The July 4th week

Holidays weeks in 2023 saw lower appointment volumes. **The July 4th week had 20% fewer appointments than usual, Labor Day week had 13% fewer**, and **Memorial Day week had 11% fewer.**

+7%

### Busiest appointment month of 2023
### March

Despite a strong "New Year, New You" start to 2023, March was ultimately the top month overall for appointments, with **7% more appointments** scheduled vs. the average month.

Lowest

### Least busy appointment months of 2023
### April, September & February

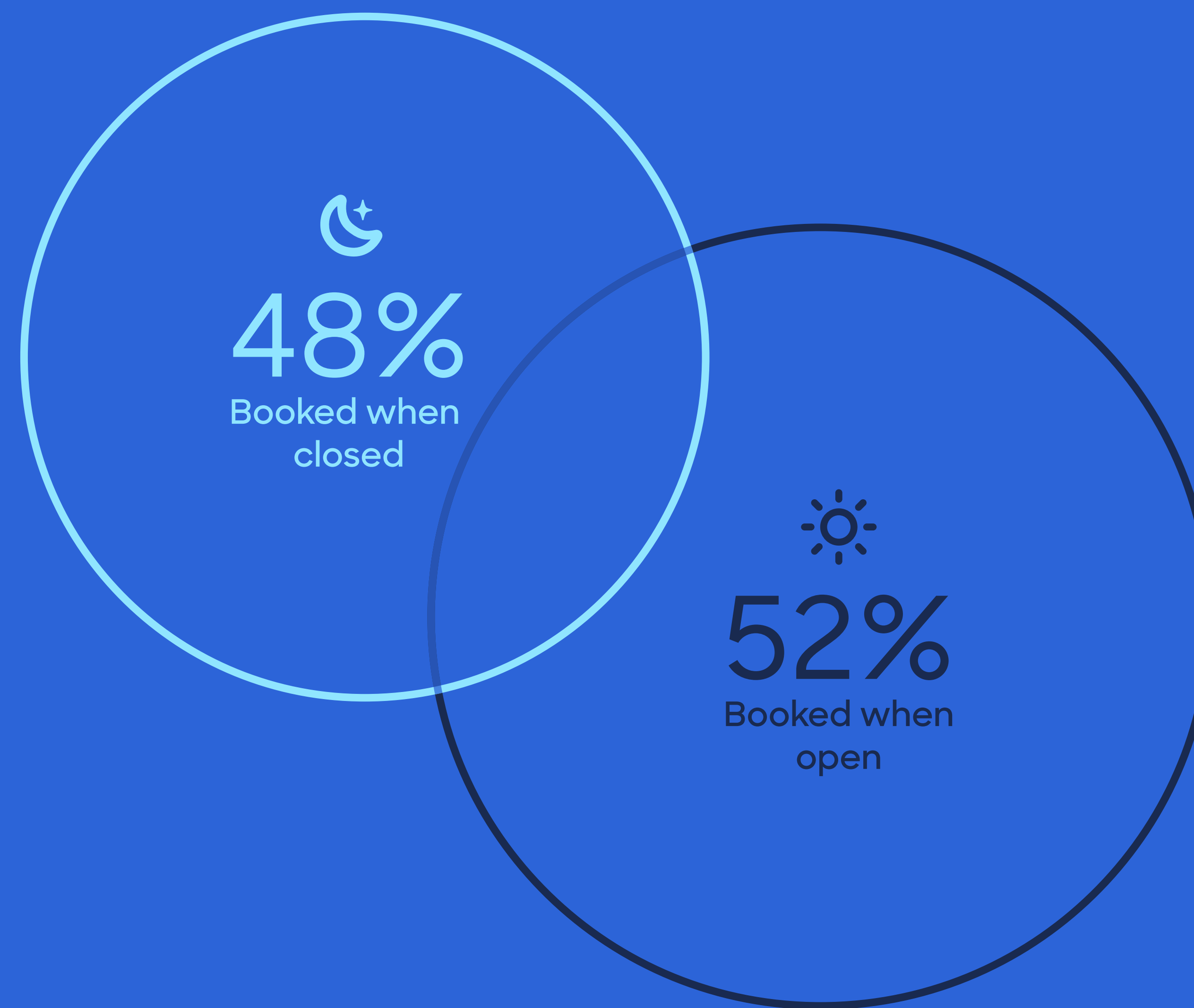
These were the three months with the **lowest appointment volume**, due in part to holidays and shortness of month relative to 31-day months.

# After-hours* bookings

Roughly half of all appointments were booked after hours, when doctors' offices are typically closed.

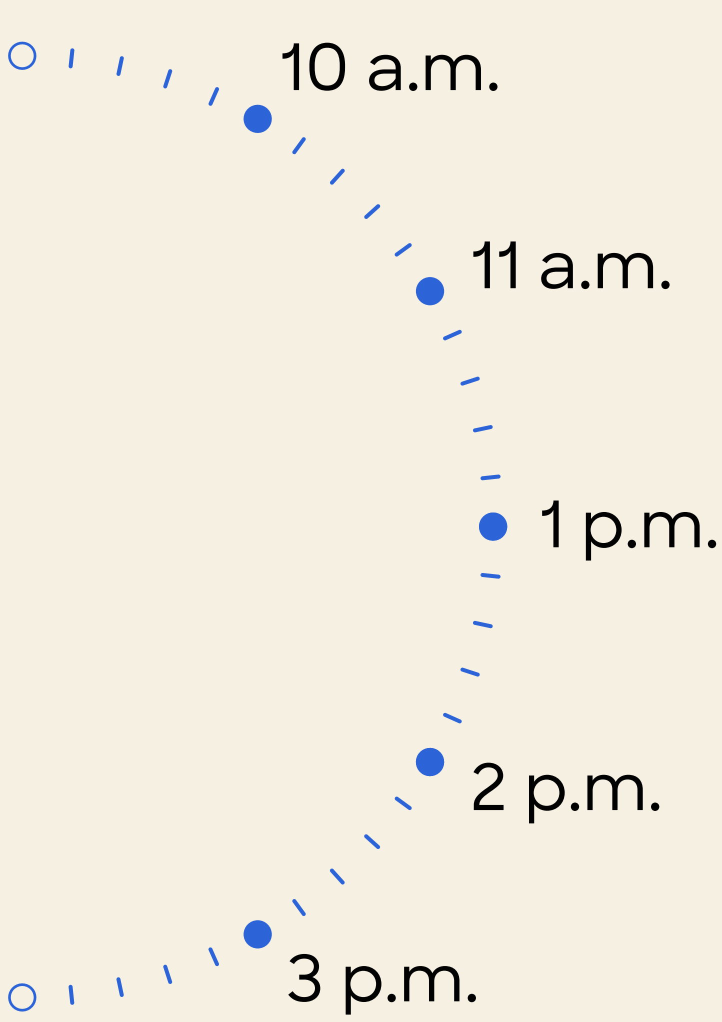
Compared to the average, podiatrist, chiropractor and urgent care appointments were the most likely to be booked after hours.

*After-hours bookings: 5 pm - 9 am local time




## Most popular appointment time slots

Overall, 10 a.m. was overall the most popular time of day for an appointment, followed closely by 2 p.m. and 11 a.m., then 1 p.m. and 3 p.m.




## Most popular appointment days

Earlier weekdays were the most popular days for an appointment, with popularity dropping off on Friday and into the weekend.

01 Tuesday
02 Monday
03 Wednesday
04 Thursday
05 Friday
06 Saturday
07 Sunday

## Most canceled appointment slots

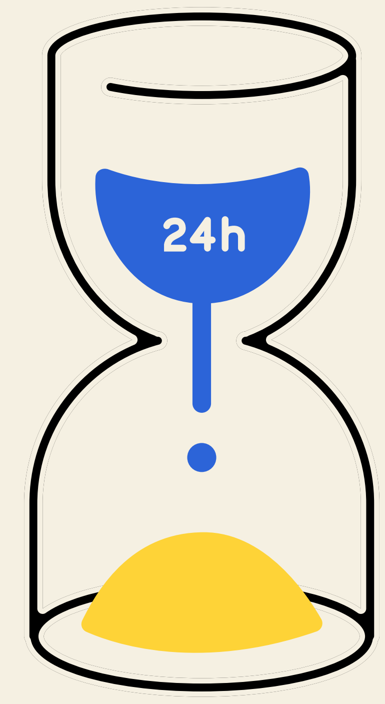
**Cancellations were highest for appointments scheduled for the weekend.**

Sunday appointments were the most canceled of any day, with a cancellation rate 15% above the average, followed by Saturday appointments at 7% above average.

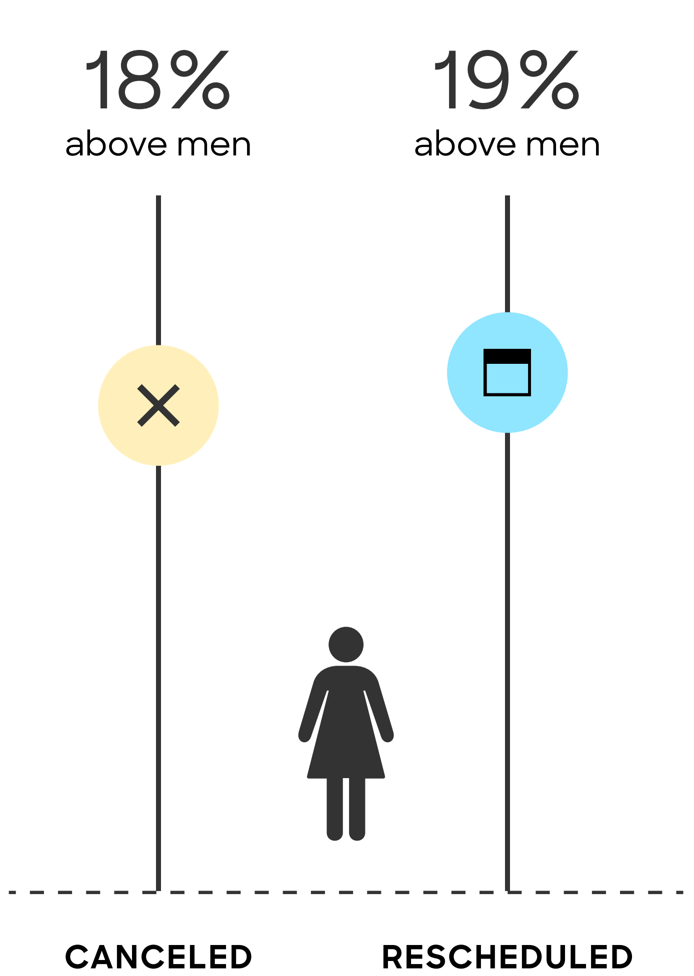
**During the work week, patients dropped out more as the day went on.**

Cancellation rates were below average before 4 p.m. each day aside from Fridays, where rates crept up after noon heading into the weekend. These grew to more than 10% above average from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.

## Near-term bookers were more likely to honor their scheduled visits.




**With every 24 hours that passed between a booking and the appointment** (up to six days after a booking), patients were an average of 4% less likely to make it to that scheduled visit.




### Female patients were less likely to attend their scheduled appointments than their male counterparts.

Women canceled at an 18% higher average rate and reschedule at a 19% higher average rate than men.

Older patients were more likely to honor their scheduled visits. With each step down in generation, patients were an average 6% less likely to attend their appointment.

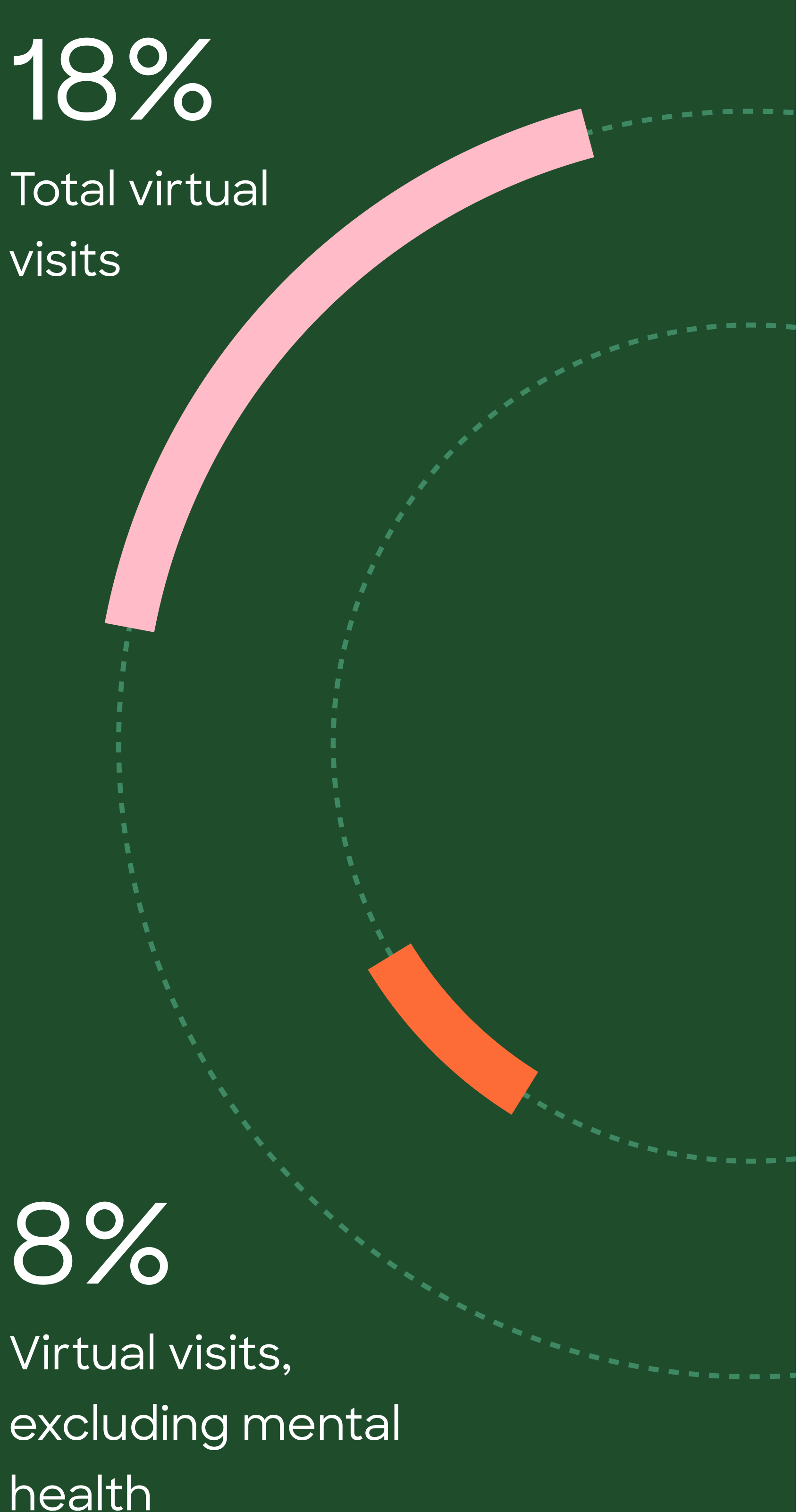
SECTION 5

# Where are they seeking care?

# Virtual vs. In-Person

Virtual visits made up 18% of all appointments booked on Zocdoc in 2023, a number heavily skewed by mental health bookings, which are primarily virtual.

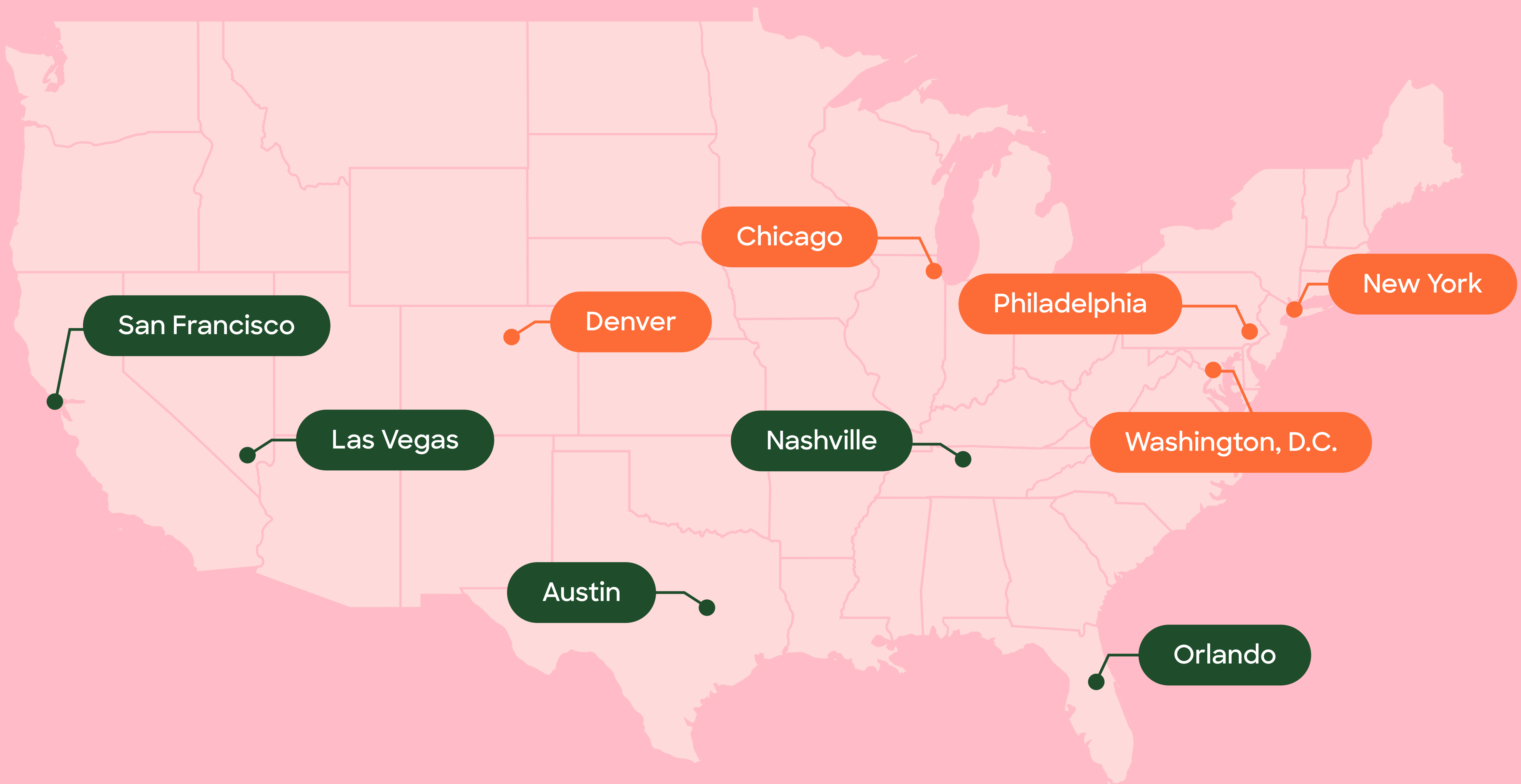
Excluding mental health, only 8% of bookings on Zocdoc were for virtual visits.




## Across nearly all specialties, patients strongly prefer in-person care

Mental health was the notable exception, leaning 86% virtual.

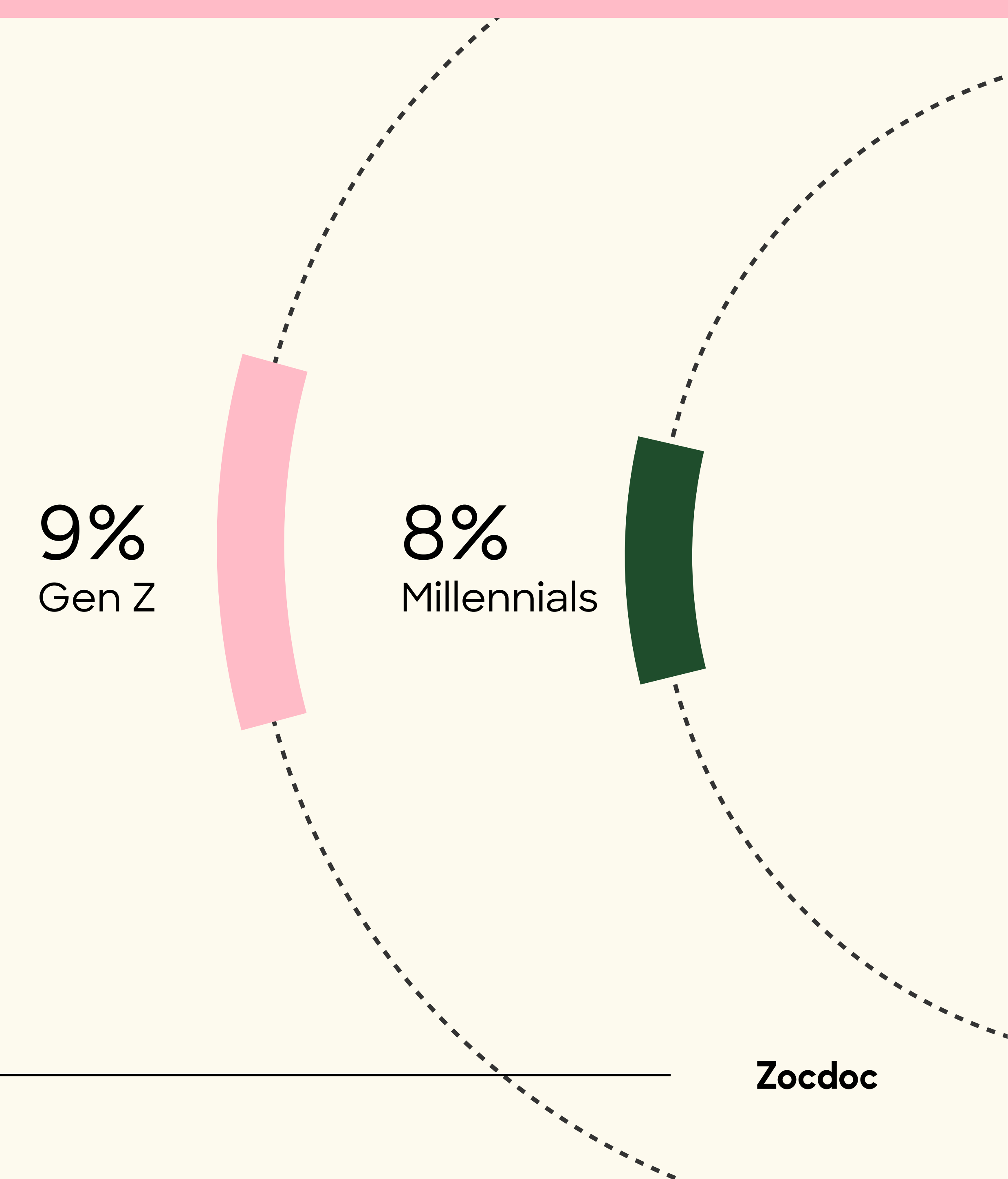
| SPECIALIST | PHYSICAL % | VIRTUAL % |
|---|---|---|
| Chiropractor | 100% | 0% |
| Dentist | 100% | 0% |
| Optometrist | 100% | 0% |
| Ophthalmologist | 99% | 1% |
| Physical therapist | 99% | 1% |
| Podiatrist | 98% | 2% |
| Ear, nose & throat doctor | 98% | 2% |
| Orthopedic surgeon | 98% | 2% |
| Ob-gyn | 98% | 2% |
| Urologist | 97% | 3% |
| Cardiologist | 97% | 3% |
| Dermatologist | 97% | 3% |
| Pediatric subspecialty | 96% | 4% |
| Allergist | 96% | 4% |
| Pediatrician | 94% | 6% |
| Neurologist | 91% | 9% |
| Gastroenterologist | 91% | 9% |
| Primary care doctor | 82% | 18% |
| Urgent care | 79% | 21% |
| Psychologist | 16% | 84% |
| Psychiatrist | 12% | 88% |




Markets that booked the most virtual care (excluding mental health)

Markets that booked the least virtual care (excluding mental health)

# Excluding mental health, Gen Z and Millennials booked the most virtual appointments



# Proximity

Roughly half of all virtual appointments took place within 20 miles of the patient, while almost 4 in 5 physical appointments were within 20 miles, indicating patients' preference for provider proximity – even when scheduling virtual care.


For in-person appointments, proximity was even more important for more "hands-on" specialties

| SPECIALIST | % WITHIN 20 MILES |
|---|---|
| Physical Therapist | **87%** |
| Pediatric Subspecialty | **84%** |
| Sports Medicine Specialist | **84%** |
| Physiatrist | **84%** |
| Neurologist | **83%** |
| Gastroenterologist | **83%** |
| Urgent Care | **83%** |
| Optometrist | **82%** |
| Nutritionist | **82%** |
| Ophthalmologist | **82%** |
| Urologist | **82%** |
| Pulmonologist | **81%** |
| Podiatrist | **81%** |
| Audiologist | **80%** |
| Dentist | **80%** |

As such, proximity of mental health providers mattered much less than other specialties, given the nature of those interactions

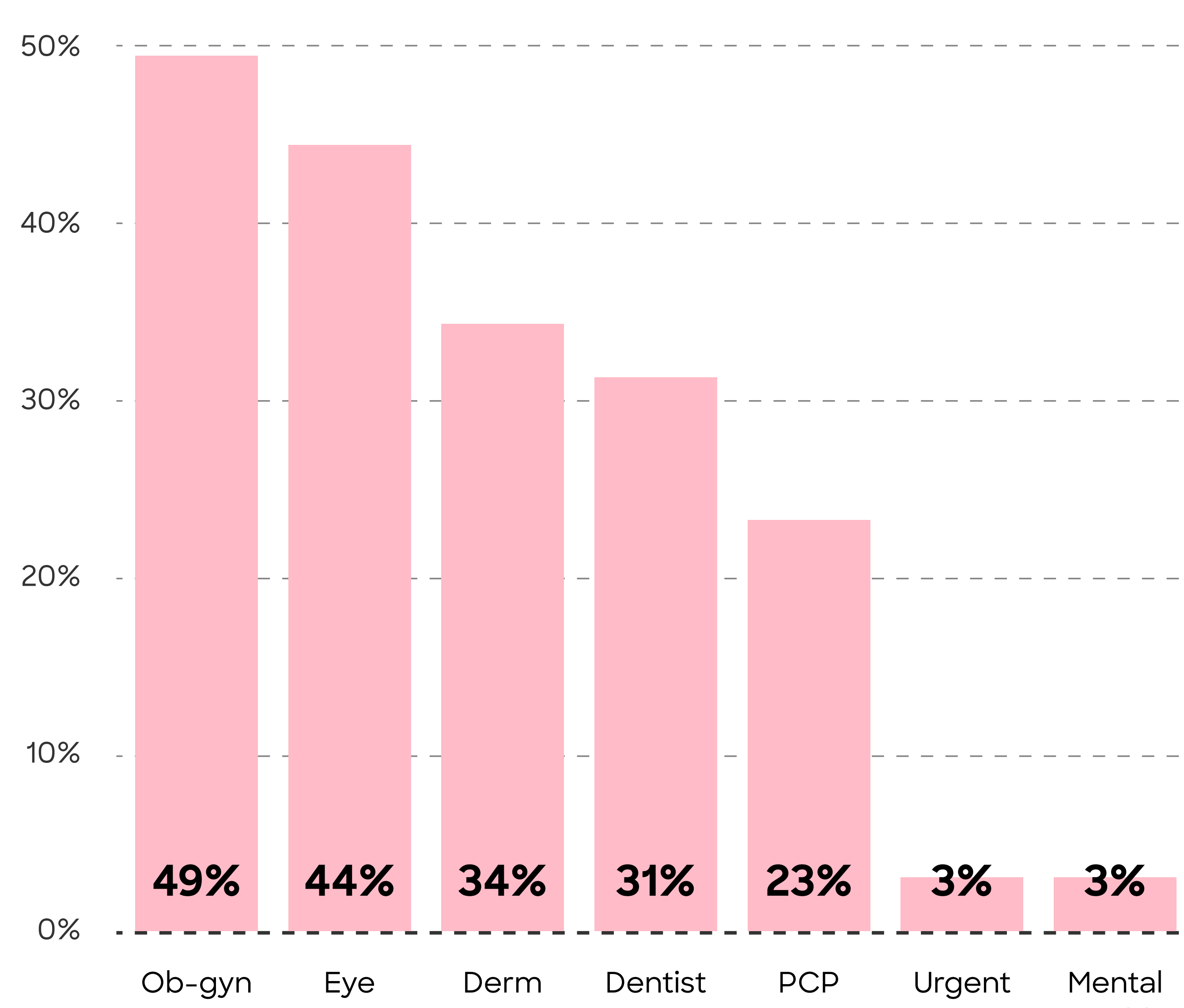
| SPECIALIST | % WITHIN 20 MILES |
|---|---|
| Psychologist | **74%** |
| Psychiatrist | **67%** |

## As many businesses have gone hybrid, so has healthcare

Patients know that healthcare is inherently physical, and they value establishing a virtual relationship with a provider that can continue in person, as needed.

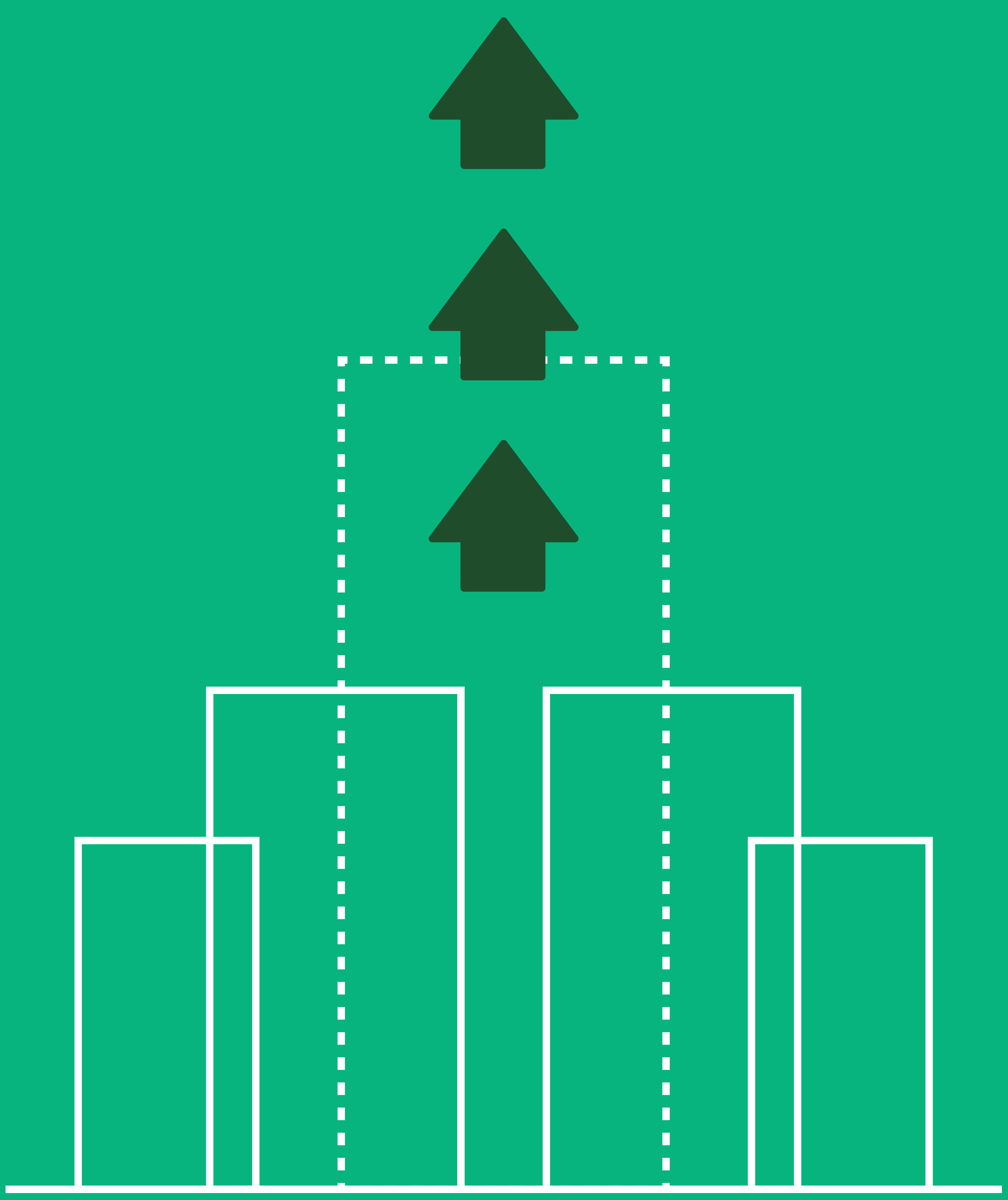
Outside of mental health, when booking a first visit virtually, nearly 1 in 5 patients (17%) booked an in-person follow-up. However, this online-offline continuity of care differed by specialty.

**% VIRTUAL VISITS WITH IN-PERSON FOLLOW UP**



SECTION 6

# 2023 Patient Empowerment Index



The Zocdoc Patient Empowerment Index represents three core elements of patients' healthcare experience:

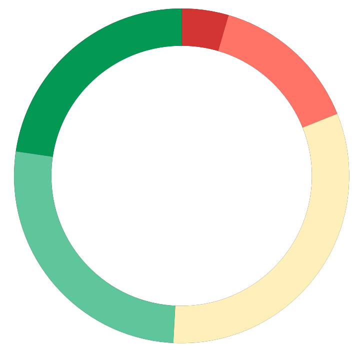
1. Access to care
2. Comfort with providers
3. Control over their healthcare

Respondents were assigned scores based on their answers to the following three questions.

These scores were then averaged to find the Patient Empowerment Index number, ranging from -80 to 120.

2023 Patient Empowerment Index:

# 58.9

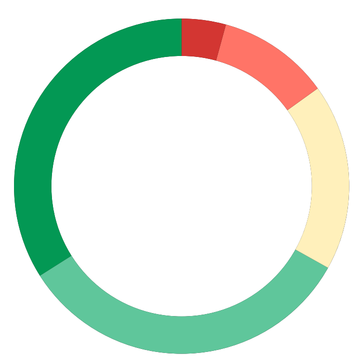


## How much control, if any, do you feel you have over your own healthcare?

No control at all: **4.6%** | A little control: **14.4%** | Moderate control: **31.6%** | Much control: **26.6%** | Full control: **22.8%**

Nearly 1 in 5 Americans say they have little to no control over their own healthcare.

The youngest (18-24) and oldest (55+) respondents feel they have the most control over their own healthcare, with only 2.5% and 2.7%, respectively, saying they have no control.



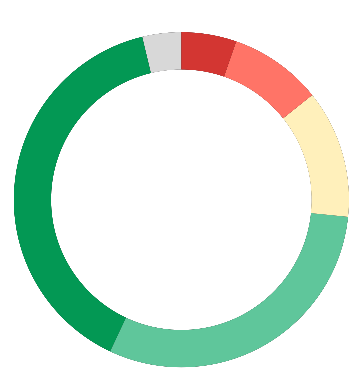
## How easy or difficult is it for you to access healthcare?

Very difficult: **3.9%** | Somewhat difficult **11.0%** | Neither: **18.5%** | Somewhat easy: **33.0%** | Very easy: **33.6%**

Nearly 15% of Americans surveyed online say it's difficult to access healthcare. Of those with difficulty accessing care, 52.3% are female and 47.7% are male.

Patients aged 25 to 34 report the hardest time accessing healthcare (22.0% = somewhat or very difficult). Patients 55+ report the easiest time accessing healthcare (77.8% = somewhat or very easy).

People living in the South are more likely than other regions to say healthcare is difficult to access (16.1% = somewhat or very difficult), while people living in the Northeast are more likely than other regions to say healthcare is easy to access (69.2% = somewhat or very easy).



## How comfortable or uncomfortable do you feel with your doctor(s), in terms of overall relationship, communication and trust?

Very uncomfortable: **5.5%** | Somewhat uncomfortable: **8.9%** | Neither: **12.6%**
Somewhat comfortable: **30.1%** | Very comfortable: **39.3%** | N/A: **3.6%**

While accessing care may be difficult, most American patients (69%) are somewhat or very comfortable with their doctor.

This comfort increases with age, with 57% of aged 18-24 respondents saying they are somewhat or very comfortable with their provider, compared to 75% of those 55 and above.

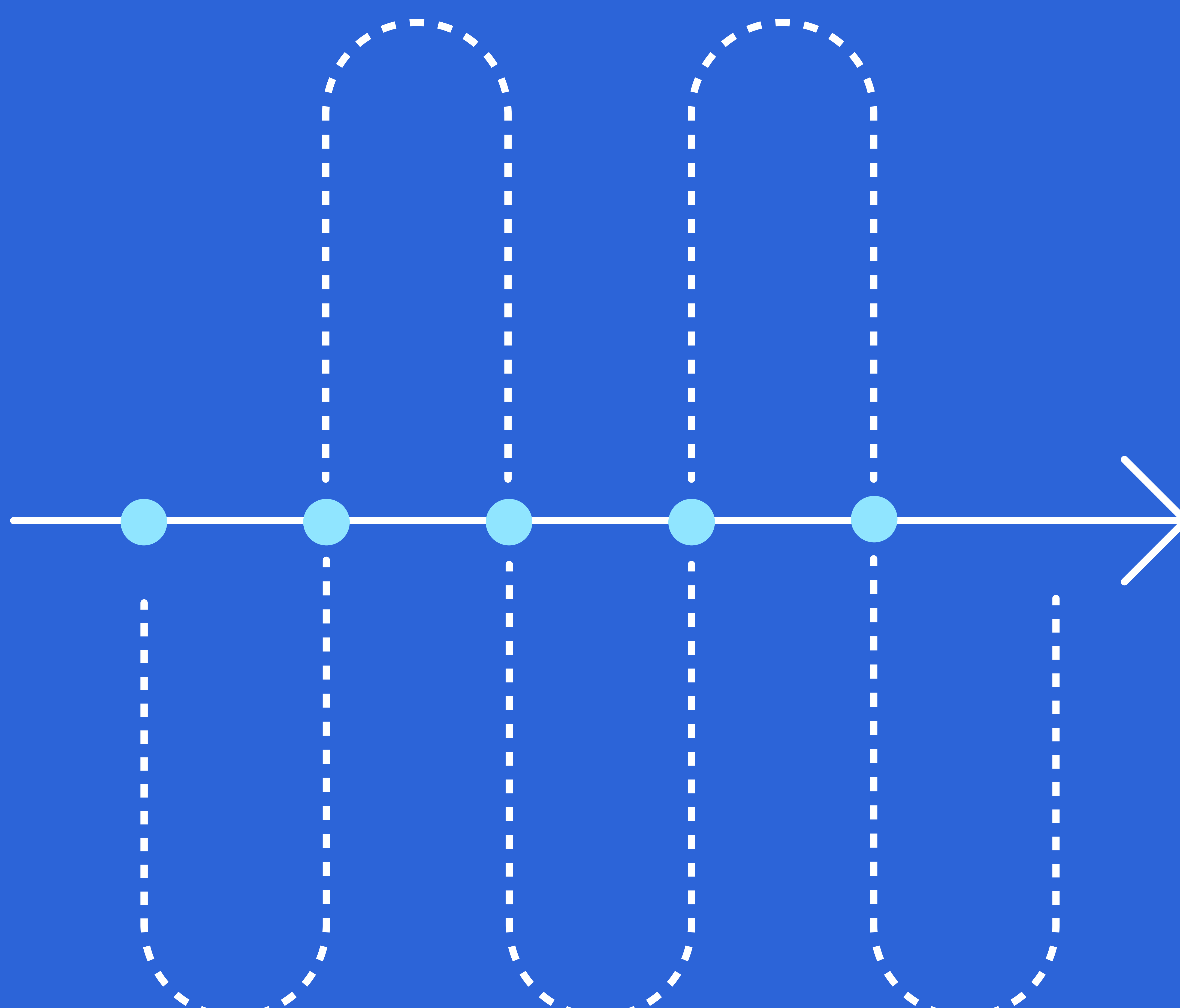
Women report more overall discomfort (16.1%) with their providers than men (11.8%).

**Methodology:**
Zocdoc commissioned Censuswide to collect this data via an online survey of 1,000 U.S. consumers aged 18 and up. The survey was fielded November 14 to November 16, 2023. Censuswide abides by and employs members of the Market Research Society, which is based on the ESOMAR principles. The confidence interval is approximately +/-3.1%.

SECTION 7

# 2024 Predictions

From Zocdoc founder & CEO Oliver Kharraz, MD



# Zocdoc founder and CEO, Oliver Kharraz, MD

shares five patient predictions and five industry predictions for the year ahead

## What Patients Will Want in 2024

**1. More Americans will choose cash-pay services that offer guaranteed, upfront pricing.**

With both healthcare costs and adoption of high-deductible health plans on the rise, Americans will be increasingly price sensitive in 2024. Uncertainty and lack of transparency when it comes to out-of-pocket costs, even for in-network care, will drive patients to increasingly select services that offer guaranteed, upfront, straightforward pricing.

**2. Patients will choose convenience over traditional providers for transactional care needs.**

Visiting a traditional physician for preventive care visits or more long-term, complex care needs will remain patients' first preference. However, they will also look outside the patient-provider relationship for services that are more transactional in nature. As such, we can expect a rise in urgent care bookings for acute issues, as well as increased utilization of virtual and instant prescription services.

**3. Mental health bookings will rise in the back half of 2024 tied to the election.**

As America heads into another presidential election year, patients nationwide will be grappling with tensions surrounding the vote and its outcome. More Americans will likely turn to mental health professionals in the months before and after the election, starting in the summer and potentially continuing through the inauguration and beyond.

**4. Medicare beneficiaries will increase adoption of technology that helps them navigate care.**

These aren't our grandparents' Medicare beneficiaries. Most of today's 65 and up population were in their 30s and 40s when the consumer internet took off. They are tech-fluent in other areas of their lives, from streaming entertainment to booking travel online to video chatting with their loved ones, and they are the first digitally savvy set of Medicare beneficiaries. As such, adoption of health and tech services that help them easily navigate care will continue to accelerate.

**5. Semaglutide-related bookings will continue to rise.**

As supply bottlenecks ease, the FDA approves new medications for weight loss, and Americans observe other patients' visible success, demand for these drugs will continue to rise.

# How the Industry Will Shift in 2024

**1. Big Tech will continue to over-promise and under-deliver in healthcare.**

Over the past decade, Google, Apple and Amazon have launched healthcare ventures, each with ample fanfare but little to show for it. This stems from a disconnect between what patients or the industry need and what these companies are primarily solving for: how to leverage their respective core businesses to make money in healthcare. Apple is focused on driving adoption of its hardware (Apple Watch), Google on big data applied to clinical questions (Verily) and Amazon on leveraging its supply chain in areas like pharmacy (Pillpack, Amazon Clinic). Retrofitting their core competencies into healthcare will remain a subpar strategy for Big Tech, who will make more noise than impact in 2024.

**2. AI will free up a significant portion of providers' time.**

While there's been much discussion about AI's potential use in healthcare, 2024 will be the year we'll see broader adoption starting with the greatest opportunity for physicians: automatic note-taking. Early adopters of AI medical scribes could see a real 20% time savings and capacity improvement. This has the potential to reduce provider staffing bottlenecks by opening up significant capacity in providers' schedules, which they can redirect toward seeing more patients. This may lead to a surplus of provider capacity and a meaningful shift in the current supply-demand imbalance.

**3. Consumers' digital front door to care will consolidate.**

Patients don't want to manage a portfolio of disparate apps and logins for access to different care services. In 2024, there will be greater consolidation of the front-end technology that helps patients access and navigate healthcare. In-person care, telehealth, access to prescriptions and more will come together, unifying the consumer experience. As with all other consumer industries, the digital "front door" with the most complete offering that delivers the most value throughout the patient experience will come out on top.

**4. Patient payor mix will be crucial to hospitals' strategy for regaining financial footing.**

While hospitals and health systems are often at capacity, many are still struggling financially. This is in part because they're not paying close enough attention to their payor mix. In 2024, these providers will work to meaningfully and quickly shift their patient payor mix, investing in initiatives that will help attract a more commercially insured clientele.

**5. Patients will become savvier prescription shoppers.**

As with cash-pay healthcare services, patients will increasingly go out of network and look toward competitively priced cash-pay prescription services. With pharmacy benefit managers (PBMs) under increased pressure and scrutiny, alternative pharmacy services that help consumers go direct and pay out of pocket at competitive rates will see adoption significantly grow in 2024.