

All hail the rock docs!

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Rocking doctors (from l.) William Winter, John Boggess, Nimesh Nagarsheth, Joanie Hope, John Soper and William Robinson practice for gig.

Six women's cancer docs are practicing more than medicine - they're rehearsing songs for an upcoming album.

The band N.E.D., named after the most hopeful diagnosis a doctor can give a patient - "no evidence of disease" - formed to provide entertainment at a conference of the Society of Gynecological Oncology last spring.

The positive response prompted more gigs - and now a record deal.

NYU Medical Center oncology fellow Dr. Joanie Hope, who wrote and sings "Rhythm Heals," said her song aims to inspire patients.

"It encompasses what we're all about," said Hope. "There are many ways to heal beyond what we do as doctors. My patients teach me that all the time."

Drummer Dr. Nimesh Nagarsheth, a women's cancer researcher who teaches at Mount Sinai School of Medicine, wrote "Third-Person Reality" about a doctor's struggle to help patients deal with cancer diagnoses.

"It's tempting to remove yourself from the situation and be like a third person," said Nagarsheth, "but we have to overcome that because our patients need us."

The hard-rocking track "False Pretenses," urging genuine communication when time is short, is sung by Dr. John Boggess, whose specialties also include guitar and robot-assisted surgery at UNC-Chapel Hill.

The song's thumping bass line comes courtesy of Dr. William (Rusty) Robinson, head of cancer research at Texas Tech University. Dr. William Winter of Northwest Cancer Specialists in Portland, Ore., plays lead guitar.

Several band members play guitar and sing, as well as write songs. Dr. John Soper, a professor of obstetrics at UNC-Chapel Hill, even plays mandolin.

It took these rock docs an average of 11 years to earn their medical degrees, but less than a year for their band to get a record deal with Motema Records, which recently produced a Jazz Therapy CD to benefit Englewood (N.J.) Medical Center's Dizzy Gillespie Memorial Fund that provides medical services to jazz musicians.

Their album is set for a November 2009 release in conjunction with the Gynecological Cancer Awareness Movement, part of the band's mission to raise consciousness about ovarian, cervical and other women's cancers to the same level as breast cancer.

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