
The Shojania Family: Rheumatology Brothers

By Kam Shojania, MD, FRCPC; and Nima Shojania, MD, FRCPC

All the Shojanias in the world are related. We all have a similar, curly-haired and slightly rumped appearance with unique spastic dance moves. There are a number of Shojania physicians in North America. Our father, Nasser, for example, is a retired dermatopathologist in Victoria, British Columbia. So, it is not unusual that out of three Shojania brothers, two of them became physicians. The third, Keyvan, became a lawyer, and when asked why he became a lawyer when the family tradition is medicine, Keyvan says it's because he "wants to help people." Our mother, Mitra, has mentioned that having two boys become rheumatologists was a slight disappointment, because she wanted at least one cardiologist or plastic surgeon son. However, she is now quite pleased that both her boys enjoy rheumatology practice.

The two Shojania rheumatologists are seven years apart. We both went to the University of Victoria for our undergraduate degrees and to the University of British Columbia (UBC) for med school and residency training. The elder brother (Kam) has stayed close to home in Vancouver in an academic practice and the younger brother (Nima) has moved to Kelowna in a community practice. While we often discuss the merits and occasional frustration of each choice, we agree that the community rheumatology practice in Kelowna is conducive to a wonderful quality of life. One of our favorite family times is when the entire clan (yes, even the lawyer) goes to Kelowna in August for water sports, great food, wine and rowdy conversation.

One interesting commonality is that each of us worked with Barry Koehler at different times. One can either feel sorry for us or feel sorry for Dr. Koehler. However, we admit that we learned a great deal from Barry and his wife, Mary, in terms of professional practice and work-life balance.

We enjoy sharing patients who move between Kelowna and Vancouver, but one unexpected dilemma is how we address each other in correspondence. "Dear Dr. Shojania" sounds awkward, so "Dear Kam/Nima", while perhaps too



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Drs. Kam and Nima Shojania at the 2017 family reunion.

familiar, is what we have settled upon. While it is sometimes annoying that our laboratory and imaging reports are misdirected, our experience as brother rheumatologists has been good. It is great to have someone close to chat about diagnostic dilemmas and share a room at conferences. It is also confusing to plaintiff lawyers to have two Shojania rheumatologists. We are fortunate that we have a similar approach to clinical rheumatology.

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