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## Don't worry, now doc is just a call away Buy A Pre-Paid Voucher & Select Doctor Of Your Choice

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NEW DELHI

NEED to consult a doctor? Just call. Thanks to a new medical consultation service—entitled Doctor Talk—you can now consult a specialist doctor over the phone for a small fee. You can choose from a list of doctors and also use teleconferencing to tap specialists in India and abroad for a second opinion.

To avail the service, all you need to do is buy a pre-paid voucher and select the doctor of your choice. "Users can then call the company which connects the patient to the physician and the service is charged per minute," says Pramod Saxena, CMD of the Gurgaon-based IT services company Oxigen which has just

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**PRAMOD SAXENA** CMD, OXIGEN

launched the service. Doctor Talk works on mobile and landline phones of all operators.

"About 50% of medical consultations and 75% of follow up visits do not require physical examination. People spend hours visiting and consulting a doctor for a check up that usually takes just a few minutes. When most of the diagnostic details can also be shared online, the patient doesn't need to

physically go and see the doctor. We are looking to tap this segment," Mr Saxena told ET.

While the cost of consultation would vary depending on the level of specialisation, the call charges for the service would be significantly lower than what doctors usually charge per visit. And it would also save time.

One of the reasons why doctors avoid phone consultations is be-

cause it infringes on their privacy not to mention the loss of consultation fees. In most cases, hospitals also do not allow medical consultation over the phone. The new service will protect the privacy of doctors as their numbers will not be disclosed to patients and the call consultations will be limited to a specified time. The com-

pany is exploring talks with hospitals to work out a revenue sharing model so that there is no conflict of interest for doctors who work in these hospitals but have also been empanelled for Doctor Talk.

Doctor Talk will use the conference call service provided by Oxigen's US-based group company Chorus Call. Started in 2004, privately held Oxigen offers several mobile-based services.