Female Speaker: Is that your papa? Dan Pearlman: Oh what a big boy, ah? Female Speaker: It's a very special day, for Ashland, Massachusetts native Dan Pearlman and his grandson Maddy. Dan Pearlman: I am not sure he knows what it is about, matter of fact I am sure he doesn't know what it's about. But his grandfather and grandmother they know. Female Speaker: They know today is Maddy's first Halloween. An exciting time for grandpa and grandson alike. Dan stays active thanks in part to all the fun he has with his grandson but he wants to make sure that good times will continue for years to come. Dan sees his doctor regularly to help keep tabs on his high blood pressure and all of his information including his last vital signs is kept-in an electronic health record. Technology he readily embraces. Dan Pearlman: To me any vehicle you know, the use of technology to streamline you know that communication in anyway is worth its wait and go. Female Speaker: David Bates is Chief of General Internal Medicine, at Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston, Massachusetts and Dan's personal physician. David Bates: Tell me what's being going on? Dan Pearlman: Feeling pretty well. David Bates: Medicine is changing very fast and it is effectively impossible for any individual provider to keep up with all the changes in medicine. Female Speaker: These major changes can come in the form of new guidelines for treating certain conditions what studies a patients might be eligible for or even information about medication records. An electronic health record has built in features that can provide all of up-to-date information to the physician as he is seeing a patient. David Bates: That's actually one of the big benefits of the electronic records because you can take the information that people need and make it available to the provider you know very, very rapidly bring it very close to the point of care. Female Speaker: Dr. Bates is known around the world as one of the top patient safety researchers, he says the United States has some catching-up to do in terms of the wide spread use of electronic medical records. David Bates: The US really is behind in this area, most of the rest of the developed world is already using electronic health records in outpatient setting. Female Speaker: Electronic records also impact the way patients communicate with their healthcare providers. Dan Pearlman: But my convenience I can go in online, it's a very secure way 7X24 anytime and access my medical records you know and check when my next appointment is, check what prescriptions I am taking, request a referral if there's something that I am worried about and I have some symptoms that I don't think its really require a physicians attention, I can go into their health database and search on certain things I just find it you know terrific. Female Speaker: Electronic prescribing is another feature designed to improve patient safety partly by eliminating the need to interpret a physician's handwriting, doctors choose prescription and correct dosages on the screen and they're transmit it electronically. David Bates: Penicillin, the medication will come up, and here I get a warning showing that this patient has a relevant allergy.