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House calls: home health amenities of the rich and famous



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Money can't buy health

The best health amenities don't necessarily ensure the best health. In 2009, Michael Jackson died from a tragic anesthesia overdose in a rented Holmby Hills mansion. For most, the shocking news was unfathomable. The King of Pop was gone, victimized by a medical treatment typically reserved for hospitals or surgery centers. How could this happen? The hard lesson—money talks, and sometimes it cuts corners.

Truth is, the super rich routinely integrate convenient health-centric amenities into their multi-million dollar digs. Including fitness studios, Hammam spas, hair salons, massage and aromatherapy rooms, Vitamin C showers, and yes, even high-tech medical rooms.

Why? Because they can. Call it an indulgence, professional convenience or ego, the über wealthy spare no expense—the investment is well(ness) worth it.

Home as hospital

After his first daughter's birth, rapper Kanye West reportedly proposed installing a \$5.1 million "house hospital" into his Hidden Hills, California mansion. It boasted an X-ray machine, CT scanner and medical supplies — an odd pitch from Dr. Buzzkill himself.

Most brand-new parents are hyper-protective, but Yeezy's pitch was viewed as over-the-top bizarre, especially for a musician without medical training.

Even outrageous wife Kim Kardashian thought West's idea went too far. That's a reality star reality check for hip hop's biggest ego, a grandstander who dropped F-bombs in the Oval Office, showed the world his top secret 0-0-0-0 iPhone passcode and hijacked Taylor Swift's MTV award speech. "Ye" is a bit paranoid, but let's excuse him on this one. He's not alone on the house hospital idea.

Los Angeles developer Nile Niami calls these perks "sweeteners." He would know; he's the Candy Man. "Il Magione," a Niami-built 31,450-square-foot Holmby Hills villa with its own medical room, hair salon, gym and full spa with steam shower, lists for nearly \$70 million.

And that's chump change compared to Niami's other eye candy palace, Bel Air's *The One* (\$500 million).

When money is no object

"The demand from doctors and licensed therapists [for in-home medical rooms] has increased since many have been dissatisfied with the commercial properties available," says Ivan Estrada, broker for Douglas Elliman. "Dentists the most, psychiatrists, podiatrists—even the rare surgeons request these properties."

Estrada says these properties pop up in higher-end neighborhoods as combined home-offices where the benefit of in-home medical rooms adds an element of privacy for exclusive clientele. New York, Miami and Los Angeles are ground zero for these in-home health experiences.

"The commute is easy, it saves money on office space, and it's tax deductible," says Estrada. "And you have the freedom to decorate the way you want."

Although medical rooms represent the extreme end of health-centric indulgence, they're part of the booming wellness trend trickling down (or up) from high-end resorts and hotels into single-family mega mansions and luxury condos. According to the Global Wellness Institute, wellness real estate is a \$134 billion market (about 1.5 percent of total annual global construction) and experts project its growth at 8 percent annually from 2017 to 2022.

Health amenities on the road...

In 2017, travelers took 830 million wellness trips—139 million more than 2015, representing 17 percent of total tourism expenditures. The \$639 billion wellness travel market's annual growth rate of 6.5 percent from 2015-2017 is more than double the growth rate for tourism overall (3.2 percent).

This trend is more specialized than ever. Following the lead of Stay Well® guest rooms in hotels, the wealthy are also incorporating wellness devices that positively regulate body processes like sleep, appetite, hormonal balance, productivity and energy levels.

Amrit Ocean Resort & Residences, a 7.5-acre property in Palm Beach, Florida, offers immersive lifestyle experiences for mind, body and soul (nutrition, fitness, mindfulness, relaxation and sleep)—via modern technology and Eastern philosophies.

With a cell phone app, residents and guests can contact an on-demand “mindful expert” who can assist at a moment's notice, even if one is having a 2 a.m. anxiety attack.

“The ultra high-end developers are adding different amenities to out-do each other,” says Rochelle Atlas Maize, executive director of luxury estates for Los Angeles-based Nourmand & Associates. “Not so much the surgery centers, but we are seeing more in-home spas, salons, health and wellness centers, etc.”

...And at home

The rich, the famous and developers are transferring these health-related experiences and amenities into a new comfort zone — the home. Why go to the gym when you can toss on shorts and walk down the hall? Or travel to the chiropractor or hair stylist when you can summon them to you? Why drive to an office across town, when you can run your practice from another wing of your house?

Even condos are getting into the act. Akoya Boca West in Boca Raton, Florida (located at the Boca West Country Club) coordinates on-site, in-home doctor visits for its residents via a 24/7 concierge—all as part of a healthy living lifestyle program. This program also offers a variety of community-based health education, prevention programs, on-site health screenings, nutrition counseling, and dedicated health navigation services, oh — and a 38,000 square foot spa.

Legal considerations

Considering Michael Jackson’s tragedy (and his rogue doctor situation), what’s legally required to integrate such facilities in homes? Special permits or licenses?

“There’s very little liability,” says Estrada. “Surgeons would need accreditation and a more thorough set up for safety reasons. But for a home office, you don’t need anything.”

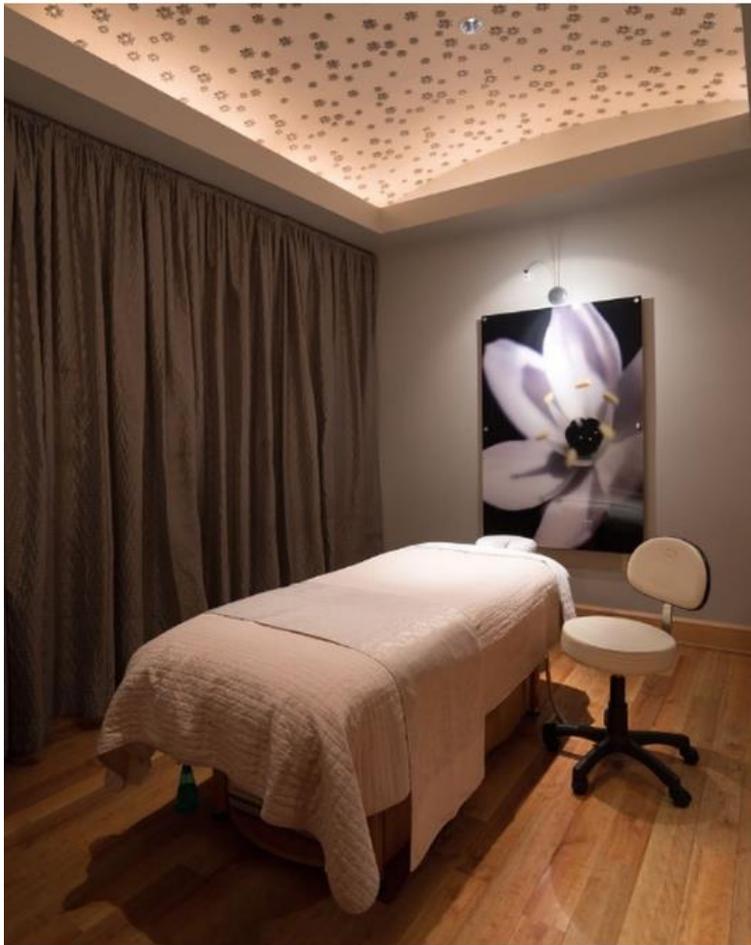
Except for space, expertise and insane disposable income. Doctors are making house calls once again. This time, it’s on-demand in a luxurious mansion or condo—the ultimate convenience, as long as it isn’t Dr. Feelgood.

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