



Working with Your Doctor



Before Your Visit:

- Practice or write down what you want to tell your doctor about your symptoms or problems.
- Make a list of questions you want to ask your doctor. Try starting with these:
 - What is my main problem?
 - What do I need to do?
 - Why is it important for me to do this?
- Decide if you want someone to go to the appointment with you.
- Make sure you know how to get to the doctor's office.

Bring the Following to Your Appointment:



- Your medications or a list of your medications.
- Your insurance card.
- A list of your allergies.
- Names of your other health care providers.
- Reports and test results from other doctors.
- Your care plan or medical summary, if you have one.
- Any forms you might need the doctor to fill out.
- Your list of questions and problems.

At Your Visit:

- Arrive early to allow time to fill out paperwork.
- Know how to explain your condition(s) and health history to the doctor.
- Set time to be alone with the doctor to discuss medicines and private issues.
- Ask questions about anything you don't understand and make sure you can follow the treatment plan.
- Ask for a written treatment plan.



After Your Visit:

- Follow up on appointments, tests and treatments.
- Get any medicines your doctor prescribed.
- Call your doctor if your health changes or if you have problems or questions.

(Turn over for tips on making your own appointments)



How to Make an Appointment:

- Be prepared. Fill in as much of the following as you can before you call.
- Get help and practice before doing this by yourself.
- Have your calendar ready to be sure you make the appointment at a time that fits with your schedule. Write the appointment in your calendar right away.
- Before you call, make sure you know:
 - Your doctor’s name;
 - Your date of birth;
 - The name of your insurance provider;
 - The reason you need the appointment.
- If you will need assistance during your appointment, such as help to get onto the exam table or an interpreter, be sure to mention it when you call.

Sample Script:

“Hello, my name is _____”
(Use your first and last name)

“I need an appointment to see _____”
(Say your doctor’s name)

“Because _____”
(Example: “I need a check up, I’m having headaches, I’m having ear pain.”)

“How soon can I get in?” _____
(Write date and time here)
If the date and time is okay, just say, “Thank you, that will be fine.”
If not, just say, “That won’t work for me, can you look for something else?”

“How long is the appointment?” _____
If you think you will need more time, just say, “I think I will need more time.”

If you will need extra help or equipment, just say so:

“I will need _____”
(Example: a lift to get onto the exam table)

Before you end the phone call, repeat the date and time of your appointment:

“Okay, I will be there on _____ at _____”
(Date) (Time)

Follow-up steps: _____
(Example: Put the appointment on the calendar so you won’t forget it. Prepare questions for the doctor. Bring a list of medications)

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