

Get the most out of your doctor visit

Next time you see a doctor, be prepared

Doctor visits can be short, so you need to be ready to give and get health information.

Use this sheet to become an active partner in your health care.

STEP 1

Prepare for your doctor visit:

- Ask a family member or friend to go with you to help remember what the doctor says
- Check that you have your insurance card to bring with you
- Gather all of your medicines (or make a list) to bring with you
- On the back of this page, write down your symptoms and a list of questions to bring with you

STEP 2

At your visit, give and get health information:

- Describe your symptoms to the doctor or nurse — this helps them give you the right care
- When you ask questions, start with the ones that are most important to you. Your questions will help your doctor learn more about you.
- Check you understand what the doctor said by repeating the information back to them in your own words. **You can say:**
 - “I think what you are saying is... is that right?”
 - “I want to make sure I understand... did I get that right?”
- Write the doctor’s answers on the back page

STEP 3

After your visit, follow your doctor’s instructions:

- **After you meet with your doctor**, follow their instructions. For example, you may need to fill a prescription at the pharmacy, make another appointment for tests or lab work, or schedule a follow-up visit.
- **There are times when you should call your doctor.** Call your doctor if you:
 - Have any side effect after taking a medicine
 - Have symptoms that get worse
 - Haven’t gotten results of any tests you’ve had – don’t assume no news is good news
 - Don’t understand your test results

On the back of this page, **list your questions and symptoms**, then bring this sheet to the visit so you can write down your doctor’s answers.



My symptoms

My doctor wants to learn about my symptoms to give me the right care. I'll tell them about these:

- My symptom(s) include: _____
- They started: _____
- They usually happen (how often): _____
- These things make them better or worse: _____
- I've had these symptoms before: Yes No When: _____
- Someone else I know also has these symptoms: Yes No Who: _____

My questions for the doctor

Here are questions I may start with, some questions of my own, and my doctor's answers:

What are my main health problems? _____

Do I need to change my daily routine? _____

What tests will I need? _____

What are my options for treatment, and how will they help? _____

How do I take my medicine — how often, how much, and at what times of day? _____

Questions of my own: _____

Have questions?



Find free help

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