



Making the most of a medical appointment

Having a successful medical appointment means both you and your provider have a clear understanding of your concerns and you leave the appointment feeling confident and satisfied that your needs were met and your voice was heard.

Prepare for your appointment.

Make a list of the top three questions you wish to ask at the appointment. Write down all additional questions you have so that if you have extra time, you can ask those as well.

Think about the following when making your list;

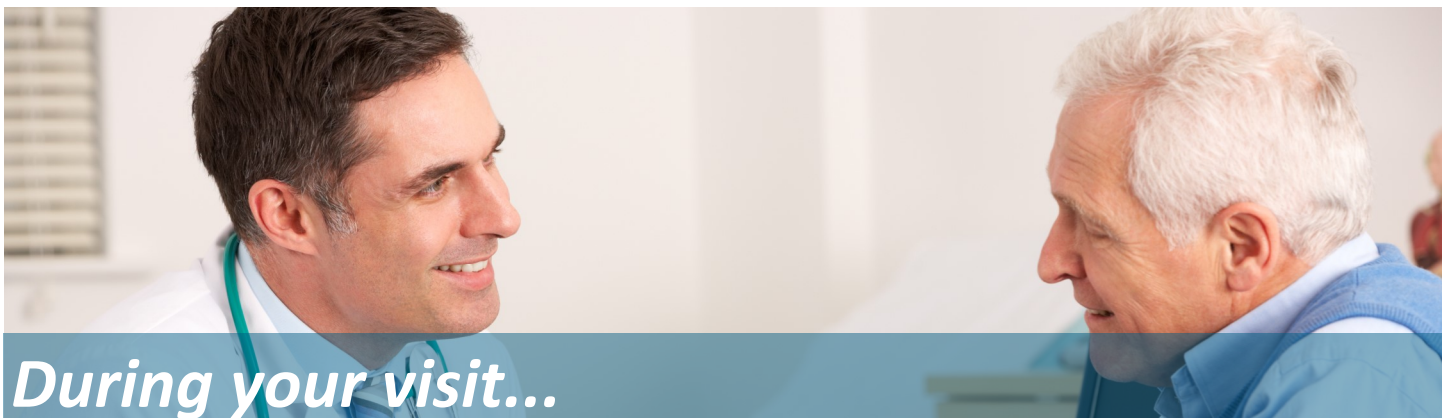
- What symptoms bother you most?
- When do they occur?
- How have things changed since your last appointment?
- Have you read or heard something recently about your condition that you would like to discuss?

When calling to make an appointment;

- When you speak with the receptionist, be clear about the purpose of your appointment.
- Ask what you should bring with you.
- A 15 minute appointment allows for your top three questions. If you think you will need more time, ask the receptionist. Additional time may be available or it may require another visit.
- If the appointment is for your child and someone other than you will be bringing your child in, ask about consent to treat forms.

Arrive 15 minutes early

- Arriving 15 minutes early will allow you time to get through registration and fill out any forms that may be necessary.
- Don't forget to bring your insurance card and form of payment if they are required.



Set the tone for your appointment.

Set the tone for a positive and productive appointment by being patient and courteous even though you may not be feeling up to it. Our staff is here to help.

Be direct about any challenges you have so that your provider can better serve you.

- Do you have a hard time reading the materials provided to you? We may have the information on video.
- Are you unable to afford the prescribed medications? There may be resources to that can help.

Bring a list of all prescriptions and over the counter medications you are currently taking.

- Inform your provider if you need prescription refills.
- It's helpful to have the dispensing bottle with you.
- Know the dosage amounts and times per day the medication is taken.
- Know the name and location of your pharmacy.

The best way to get what you need is to be open and honest with your provider.

Some things are tough to talk about. Your provider has likely heard about these conditions many times. He/she is a trustworthy, confidential resource.

Make sure you understand what your provider is telling you.

- Write down or restate what your provider is suggesting you do. Make sure you are both on the same page.
- Were these questions answered for you?
 - What is my main concern?
 - What do I need to do?
 - Why is it important for me to do this?

If you are not ready or do not want to move forward with what your provider is suggesting, tell them. There may be other options.

- Ask yourself how likely you are to follow through with what your provider is suggesting on a scale of 1 to 10.
- These could be changes in diet, quitting smoking, leaving an abusive relationship or taking medication.
- There could be another plan but you won't know unless you are honest with yourself and your provider.

Follow up to get the care you deserve.

- Be sure to follow through with scheduling appointments for additional diagnostics like lab work, x-rays or visits with a specialist.