

Making the Most of your Medical Appointments

Conversations with healthcare professionals can be difficult for many reasons.

Using these questions at your next appointment can help you be an **ACTIVE** participant in your own healthcare journey.

Consider these questions ahead of time and bring this sheet with you.

At the BEGINNING of the appointment:

Think about what accommodations you need to help you fully participate in the appointment.



Present Requests

It would help me if you could...

- Write down key words as we go
- Tell me what you're writing on the computer
- Speak slowly and facing me so that I can hear you
- Allow me to record our appointment so that I can listen again
- Speak directly to me OR speak directly to my support person
- Something else: _____

DURING the appointment:

Don't minimize your problem – explain it clearly. Tell the person what you need from the appointment and tell them about your problem (even if you're repeating yourself).



Explain the Issue

Today I'd like to...

- Get your opinion about _____
- Discuss a new symptom: _____
- Talk about medications for _____
- Discuss my next steps for _____
- Talk about a change in my situation: _____

This is a problem because...

- My function is impaired. I cannot _____
For example: "I cannot cook for myself." "I cannot get to the bathroom."

- On a scale of 10, my pain is a _____
For example: "My pain right now is only 6, but it's a 9 every night."

- My _____ is still not resolved,
and I'd like to discuss it again.
For example: "My hip has not improved. I'd like to talk about it again."

If you don't understand what the person is saying,
ask questions to slow the conversation down OR to clarify information.



Ask to Understand

To slow someone down, ask:

- “Could you explain a bit more?”
 - “Can you tell me what that word means?”
 - “Can we write down an action plan together?”
 - “I didn't get that – can you say it again?”
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To clarify what you're hearing, ask:

- “This is what I'm hearing you say. Is that right?”
- “If this happens, what are my options?”
- “I thought _____. Is that what you're saying?”
- “When? Where? Why? How?”

At the END of the appointment:

Make sure to ask any unanswered questions. If there is no time,
ask who you can talk to for more support or information.



Keep Asking

- Can I book a follow-up appointment today?
- Who can I talk to for more information?
- Can I get support from other professionals on the family health team?
(example: Nurse Practitioner, Counselor, Dietitian)
- What can I do while I wait for the referral appointment?
- Do I qualify for extra support from a Healthcare Navigator? (for complex care)