

# Health Enews

## How to Prepare for Your Next Doctor's Appointment

Often when making an appointment to see a doctor, you or the doctor may be in a rush to get the appointment over, but keep in mind that your health depends on good communication and asking questions. Quality healthcare is a team effort and you play an important role. While doctors know a lot about many things, they don't always know everything about you or what is best for you. This is why it is important to ask questions and speak up.

### Prepare for our doctors appointment by:

- Determine what health problems, symptoms, or concerns you have. Is there anything that makes the problem worse or better? How long have you had the problem?
- Decide if you are going to request a medication or change a medication.
- Be prepared to discuss or ask questions regarding diagnosis, medical tests and treatment options. Decide which questions are most important to you.
- Take in all medications, including herbal supplements, to your doctors appointment.
- Ask someone to attend the doctors appointment with you to understand and remember what you heard at the appointment.
- Create a health history that includes your current conditions and past surgeries or illnesses.
- If possible, know your family's health history.



### During your doctors appointment:

- Ensure you understand any new diagnosis along with the treatment and plan for the new diagnosis.
- Ask what your treatment options are. What are the benefits of each option? What are the side effects of treatment?
- Ask if you will need any tests and what testing will reveal.
- Ask how long it will take for new medications to become effective. Are there any side effects or possible interactions with foods or current medications? Find out if the medication is temporary or long term.
- Ask if you can manage a new diagnosis with a lifestyle change versus taking medication.

## **After your doctors appointment:**

After you meet with your doctor, you may need to follow his or her instructions to keep your health on track. You may need to fill a prescription, make another appointment, complete lab work, or see a specialist. Whatever the doctors instructions are, make sure you clearly understand and follow up with your doctor if:

- You experience any side effects or other problems with medications.
- Your symptoms get worse.
- You have a question regarding test results.
- You are unsure of what the next step is regarding a diagnosis or medication.

<https://www.ahrq.gov/patients-consumers/patient-involvement/ask-your-doctor/questions-after-appointment.html>  
<https://images.search.yahoo.com/search/images>

