

# Take Charge in Navigating Your Medical Journey



Talking to a doctor can be scary, especially if you have to share personal details. It can be hard to speak up for yourself but having an open and honest conversation will help doctors understand how to help you better.

## **Preparing for the Appointment**

Write down the symptoms you are feeling and are worried about. Have questions ready that you want your doctor to answer. If you are on medication and are feeling side effects, let them know.

### *Potential Questions to Ask During Your Appointment*

- Do you help a lot of patients with the pain or condition I have?
- What medications will help? What side effects do they have?
- Will any of my other prescription meds, over-the-counter meds, or supplements interact with the recommended treatment?
- Are there self-care options that can supplement medications or physical therapy?
- Will lifestyle changes help?
- Will other health specialists be consulted?
- What are the next steps if the recommended treatment does not work?

Also, write down your goals for the appointment and your overall health goals. This will help the doctor give you better information to reach your goals.

## **During the Appointment**

If you are worried or anxious about your appointment, bring a loved one like a family member, partner, or friend. They can be a second set of ears or ask questions you haven't thought of.

Take notes on your phone or in a notebook while talking to your doctor. Write down treatment options, medication recommendations, and next steps after the appointment. If you are seeing multiple healthcare professionals, keeping notes can be helpful for everyone. At the end of the appointment, review your notes and confirm the next steps.

## **Still Feeling Unheard?**

If you still feel unheard or your concerns are not taken seriously after seeing your doctor, it may be best to get a second opinion from another provider. Some doctors and patients may not be the best fit. Make sure the doctor you are seeing listens to your concerns and questions. If they don't make time for your thoughts and opinions, you may want to find a new doctor.



For more information visit:  
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