

## PREVENTION IS ESSENTIAL

Health care is more than treating sickness. It is also about preventing illness and promoting health. Some of us may not think about going to our health care provider unless we are sick. It is important to receive health information and education as well as screening when necessary.

Preventive care often can avert serious illness. Involving ourselves in preventing illness and promoting health help us to take responsibility for our health rather than being passive consumers of health.



## QUESTIONS TO ASK

### Prescriptions

- Why do I need this medication?
- Are there any special instructions?
- How soon should my symptoms improve?
- Are there any side effects?

### Tests

- Why do I need this test?
- How accurate is it?
- How will it affect my treatment?
- Are there any risks or side effects?
- Do I need to do anything special before or after the test?

### Treatment or Surgery

- What are the benefits or risks?
- How soon will it improve my condition?
- Are there any other options?
- If needed, how can I get a second opinion?

**Remember!** Your health professional is there to work WITH YOU.

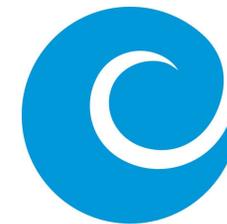
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# How To Communicate With Health Care Professionals



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## BEFORE YOUR APPOINTMENT

### Prepare and bring the right Information

- Keep track of any health changes, medications and appointments

List your symptoms. Write down all of your symptoms e.g. anything that affects your physical or emotional well being.

- When did it start?
- What makes you feel better, what makes it worse?
- How often does it occur?
- Consider if you have experienced any lifestyle changes recently. For example:
  - Has there been serious illness in your family?
  - Have there been any family problems?



### Prepare and bring a list of ALL medications

Tell your Nurse Practitioner, Doctor or Pharmacist ALL medications you are taking including vitamins, herbal products and all over the counter drugs like aspirin, Tylenol etc.

- Think about whether or not you could be pregnant
- Think about what medical tests you have had lately.
- Write down any questions that you want to ask the Nurse Practitioner, Doctor or Pharmacist.
- Bring the right papers: Health Insurance Card, Interim Federal Health Document ( if you are a recent immigrant)
- Take along a friend or relative.



## THE APPOINTMENT

- When your health care professional is giving you information or advice, listen carefully and take notes if possible
- Ask questions AND be sure you understand the answers. If not, ask more questions.
- Be open and honest with your health care professional.
- If you are confused by your health professional's "medical talk" ask him/her to explain the diagnosis or advice in simple, everyday language.

### REMEMBER!

Your health care professional is there to help and support you. A positive attitude and open communication are essential so that both you and your health care professional will have a better understanding of how to meet your needs.

It may not be possible to address all of your concerns during one visit. Be prepared to go back if you have further questions or changes in your symptoms.

**Leave yourself enough time before and after your appointment to allow for any scheduling delays.**