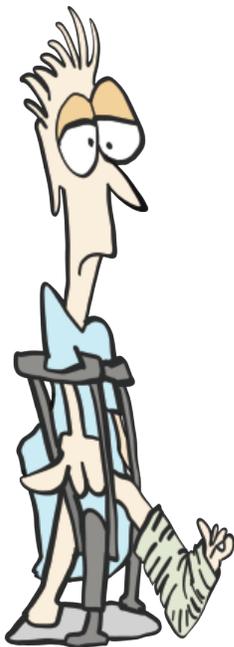


Your “GPS” for Effective Healthcare Navigation

# DOCTOR VISIT GUIDE

MAKE EVERY MOMENT COUNT



[www.aBetterLife.me](http://www.aBetterLife.me)



## Preparing for Your Doctor's Visit

How *well* you're able to communicate with your Doctors is one of the most important parts of getting to superior health outcomes. Advocating for yourself (*or a loved one*) isn't always easy, because time is short during medical visits. A good Doctor-Patient relationship requires you show up *prepared* and make the *most* of your time together. That means asking good questions, clarifying information, and making sure *you* understand *all* of their instructions. It also means being able to articulate your concerns quickly, clearly and succinctly, and communicating any changes in your health. By taking a more active role, *you* can help reduce medical errors and avoid costly complications.

## Getting Ready for an Appointment

The most *important* thing that you can do for your Doctor visit is to create a detailed *Medical Summary Report*. This is a quick synopsis of your health and a snapshot of your pressing problems & concerns. Such as, do you have any new symptoms, complications or challenges to report? Do you need refills, referrals, or have information to share from your *other* Doctors? Prioritize these on your *Medical Summary Report* and then focus on your top 3-5 issues *first*. Also, to make every visit a success, follow the enclosed *Doctor Visit Checklist (located on the back page)* for things to remember to do before, during & after your medical visits. It a *great* guide to follow.

## Making Good Use of Your Time

You *only* have a few minutes to spend with your Doctor, so make every second *count!* Focus on getting *all* of your questions answered and your needs met. Be as efficient as possible and remember to stick to the point. Ask them good questions & encourage open communication. Have your Doctor discuss your diagnosis, explain your treatment options, and cover any anticipated costs. Talk to them about long-term implications and above all, make sure that you understand what it is that *you* can do to help manage your ongoing care. Remember to be *honest*, even if it's tempting to say what you "*think*" they want to hear, rather than what is the total 100% *honest* truth.

## Seeing the Bigger Picture

It will also help if your Doctor knows about the *non-medical* parts of your life. As I learned first-hand, it's *NOT* just about fixing your body, as so many other areas of your life become impacted when you're having medical issues. In my 8 Ways to Wellness Program (*Physical, Financial, Organizational, Environmental, Legal, Emotional, Social and Spiritual*), I teach the importance of creating lasting balance & harmony among *all* the areas of your life. So, it's important for your Doctor to know a little bit more about who you are, where you live, what you do, and what your life is like, so they can better assist you in reaching that balance.

## Making Good Decisions

Making good decisions requires you to understand what your treatment options are, and what they can (*and cannot*) do to help you. You need to weigh the pros and cons carefully, understand the risks & benefits, and be knowledgeable about your options in order to find the right ones for *you*. This includes considering your own values & circumstances and understanding the impact your decisions will have on your life. The bottom line is that *you* are the one who is most familiar with *your* body, and *you* are that one who must live with the choices you make. So, choose wisely!

# — Advocating Approach —

*A Great Framework to Follow when Talking to Your Doctor*

Letter	Words to Remember	Important Points to Cover
<b>A</b>	<b><u>ACKNOWLEDGE</u></b> <i>Your Health History</i>	Have you experienced this before?
<b>D</b>	<b><u>DISCUSS</u></b> <i>The Duration</i>	How often does it happen to you?
<b>V</b>	<b><u>VERIFY</u></b> <i>The Location</i>	Where does it bother you most?
<b>O</b>	<b><u>OUTLINE</u></b> <i>The Onset</i>	When did your problem first begin?
<b>C</b>	<b><u>CHART</u></b> <i>The Characteristics</i>	Describe your problem in detail.
<b>A</b>	<b><u>ANALYZE</u></b> <i>What Bothers You</i>	What situations make it worse?
<b>T</b>	<b><u>TALK</u></b> <i>About Timeframes</i>	What was the sequence of events?
<b>I</b>	<b><u>INVESTIGATE</u></b> <i>What Gives Relief</i>	What situations make it better?
<b>N</b>	<b><u>NOTE</u></b> <i>The Severity</i>	On a scale of 1-10 how bad is it?
<b>G</b>	<b><u>GIVE</u></b> <i>More Details</i>	What else is important to note?



# — Doctor Visit Checklist —

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Done	Before Your Doctor's Visit
<input type="checkbox"/>	Meet your appointment requirements ( <i>fasting / pre-medications / food restrictions</i> )
<input type="checkbox"/>	Update your List of Medications & Supplements ( <i>bring it with you</i> )
<input type="checkbox"/>	Update your List of Allergies & Immunizations ( <i>bring it with you</i> )
<input type="checkbox"/>	Update your List of Doctors & Medical Appointments ( <i>bring it with you</i> )
<input type="checkbox"/>	Update your List of Pharmacies & Mail Order Information ( <i>bring it with you</i> )
<input type="checkbox"/>	List Items Needed from your Doctor ( <i>prescriptions / referrals / pre-authorizations</i> )
<input type="checkbox"/>	Complete your Medical Summary Report ( <i>summarize your problems &amp; questions</i> )
<input type="checkbox"/>	Complete your Medical History ( <i>for yourself &amp; your family members</i> )
<input type="checkbox"/>	Know your Health Insurance Benefits ( <i>co-pays / deductibles / out-of-pocket costs</i> )
<input type="checkbox"/>	Get your Bloodwork Done ( <i>3-5 days prior so your Doctor gets results in time</i> )
<input type="checkbox"/>	Gather your Medical Records ( <i>x-rays / MRI's / medical tests, etc.</i> )
<input type="checkbox"/>	Gather your Advance Directives ( <i>living will / power of attorney / healthcare surrogate</i> )
<input type="checkbox"/>	Get Permission for Medical Care ( <i>if you're the caregiver or advocate for others</i> )
<input type="checkbox"/>	Get Money ( <i>cash for vending machines &amp; valet parking / credit card to pay Doctor</i> )
<input type="checkbox"/>	Bring a Friend or Family Member ( <i>two heads are better than one</i> )
<input type="checkbox"/>	Pack a Recording Pen or Smartphone ( <i>record everything &amp; forget nothing</i> )

Done	During Your Doctor's Visit
<input type="checkbox"/>	Present your Photo ID
<input type="checkbox"/>	Present your Health Insurance Card
<input type="checkbox"/>	Pay for your Doctor visit
<input type="checkbox"/>	Provide your Medical Summary Report for the Doctor to review in advance
<input type="checkbox"/>	Take notes and record your Doctor's visit
<input type="checkbox"/>	Double check that all your questions were answered & needs were met
<input type="checkbox"/>	Have your Doctor check your Medical Devices (BP, Diabetes, etc.)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Complete your New Medication Questionnaire – if prescribed new medications

Done	After Your Doctor's Visit
<input type="checkbox"/>	Make your next appointment & understand your requirements ( <i>fasting, etc.</i> )
<input type="checkbox"/>	Get referrals for other Doctors ( <i>if needed</i> )
<input type="checkbox"/>	Get Prescriptions for any Medications or Medical Tests ( <i>if needed</i> )
<input type="checkbox"/>	Arrange to get a copy of the Doctor's notes ( <i>for you</i> )
<input type="checkbox"/>	Arrange to get a copy of the Doctor's notes ( <i>sent to your other Doctors</i> )
<input type="checkbox"/>	Sign a Release of Information Form ( <i>if needed to share your Medical Records</i> )
<input type="checkbox"/>	Complete Your "To Do" List ( <i>what you need to AFTER you leave your appointment</i> )
<input type="checkbox"/>	Sign-up for Patient Portal to access ( <i>if available</i> )

