



Make the Most of Your Doctor Visits



There are things you can do before, during, and after your doctor visit to help you get great care. Take a little time to plan ahead. This will help you get your questions answered, understand your treatment options, and know what you need to do next.



Getting Ready for Your Appointment

Make a list to take along

You'll find a helpful worksheet on the back of this guide. If you would rather make your own list, here are some things to include:

- **The questions you want to ask.** Examples: Why am I feeling this way? How am I doing? What else can I be doing to feel better? Have I had all the screening tests I need for my age?
- **What you need to tell or show your doctor.** This could include symptoms, family history, or if you've been around other people who've been sick.
- **All medications and supplements you currently take.** That includes over-the-counter medications, vitamins, and herbal remedies. Better yet, bring all these items with you so your doctor can see the labels.
- **Any allergies you have,** including bad reactions you've had to medications.

Think about asking someone to go with you

Consider taking a trusted friend or family member with you. This can be really helpful if you feel sick or have serious health problems. This person can help listen and take notes.



During Your Appointment

- **Explain why you're there.**
- **Answer the doctor's questions.** Your clear and complete answers help the doctor figure out what might be going on.
- **Listen to your doctor's diagnosis.** Do you understand what your provider is telling you? If questions come up, ask them.
- **Ask questions about any medications, tests, or procedures your doctor recommends.** Remember, more treatment doesn't always mean better care. It's smart to ask about risks, side effects, alternative treatment options, and what the doctor expects to learn from the procedure.
- **Ask any remaining questions from your list.** Ask anything your doctor hasn't already answered, and take notes.
- **Know what happens next.** Before you leave, make sure you're clear about the next steps and when they need to happen.

You can get this document in another language, large print, or another way that's best for you. Call toll-free (800) 431-4135. TTY users call (800) 735-2900.

Usted puede recibir este documento en otro idioma, impreso en letra más grande o de cualquier otra manera que sea mejor para usted. Llame al número gratuito (800) 431-4135. Los usuarios del servicio TTY pueden llamar al (800) 735-2900.



Follow Through

- **Do your part.** Most likely, you agreed to do something: come in for a test, schedule a follow-up appointment, try a new medication. Be sure to follow through.
- **Watch for possible problems.** For your safety, be alert in the hours and days after you start a new medication or treatment. If you notice any new symptoms or problems, let your doctor know right away.
- **Call back if you need to.** If you have new questions or concerns after your appointment, call your doctor’s office. If you were expecting to get test results or schedule tests and haven’t heard from anyone, call the doctor’s office.



Use PacificSource as a Resource

Contact our Customer Service team when you have questions. We can help with:

- Tell you whether a surgery, procedure, or medication needs to be pre-approved.
- Help you find doctors in your plan’s network.
- Answer questions about a claim or Explanation of Benefits (EOB) statement.



How to Ask Questions

Many people hold back on asking questions during their medical appointments. Some are embarrassed, think it will take too much time, or they’re not sure what to say.

Asking questions can be hard. But remember, it’s your body. You need—and deserve—to understand what your doctor or other health professional is telling you.

- Take your time and think about what the doctor has said.
- Ask questions that will help you clearly understand the diagnosis.
- Refer to your list of questions, or use the worksheet on the back of this brochure to guide you.



More Ways to Ask for Information

If you don’t understand the answers to your initial questions, here are some ways to ask again:

I’m sorry, but I still don’t really get that. Could you explain it in a different way?

I’m not sure I understand the reason for that test. What will we learn from doing it?

I’m still not clear on my treatment options. Could you write them down for me?

See last page for our doctor visit worksheet.

Prepare for your Doctor Office Visit

This form will help you remember important information. You may want to talk about these things with your doctor.

Doctor's name:

Date of office visit:

Complete this section **before** your appointment.

Questions or concerns (symptoms, when you first noticed them, relevant family history, etc.):

Prescription drugs, over-the-counter medicines, or supplements you are currently taking. List any allergies:

Complete the following sections **during** your appointment.

If your doctor recommends medication, tests, screenings, or procedures:

Diagnosis or condition being treated?

Name of the test or procedure?

What are the risks?

Are these tests routine or diagnostic?

Are there other options?

How do I prepare?

If your doctor writes a prescription:

What is the name of the medication?

Are there any side-effects?

At the end of the visit, ask:

Do I need to come back for another visit?

Can I call for test results?

What danger signs should I look for?

What else do I need to know?