



# What it means to be an active patient

## 7 ways to become more involved in your care

Doctors are experts on medical care. But you are the expert on yourself and your life. That's why it's important to be an active patient. When you're actively involved in decisions about your care, you can be sure your choices reflect your values and beliefs.

- 1. Ask questions.** Write down your questions before your doctor visit. If your doctor says something you don't understand, don't be afraid to ask them to explain it in a different way.
- 2. Bring a support person.** Consider taking a trusted friend or relative to appointments to help you remember what your doctor said.
- 3. Help your doctor.** Answering your doctor's questions fully and truthfully will help your doctor better manage your care.
- 4. Use your whole team.** Find out who else is on your treatment team and how they can help you. For example: A nurse practitioner may be more available to answer questions than your doctor. A social worker can help you with insurance issues or recommend a support group.
- 5. Connect the dots.** If you have multiple doctors, write down their names and their role in your care. Provide a copy of this list to each doctor, and make it clear that you expect them to communicate with each other about your care.
- 6. Be involved in decisions** about your care. Your thoughts, feelings, and values are an important part of any decision, so share them with your doctor.
- 7. Do your part.** After you and your doctor have made a decision, find out what you can do to ensure the best possible outcome.

Copyrighted material adapted with permission from Healthwise, Incorporated.



**Want to  
learn more?**

Go to  
[Blog.PacificSource.com](https://blog.pacificsource.com).

