



PREPARE FOR YOUR VISIT WITH YOUR DOCTOR.

According to national physician surveys, the average patient gets 10 to 20 minutes with their doctor. You want to make the most of your limited time with them, but how? Here are some tips to help you be prepared to cover all your questions while meeting with your doctor.



Make a list and prioritize items – Bring a list with you that has all that you want to discuss with your doctor. List them from most important to least important. Bring up this list at the start of your appointment so that none of your concerns get overlooked.

Share former doctors' names and addresses with your new doctor – This will help your doctor get important medical records from your prior doctors, so that s/he can have a better understanding of your medical conditions.

Bring a family member or friend – It can be helpful to bring a trusted person with you to your appointment. They can help you with your list of questions, or take notes during the visit. This can help you remember later exactly what your doctor said.



Describe your symptoms – Be prepared to clearly and briefly describe your symptoms to your doctor, and be open about them. Include when the symptoms started, what triggers them, how you feel, and what you have done to relieve them.



Take your medications with you – Make a list of all prescription drugs, over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, herbal remedies, and supplements. You can also put the bottles in a bag and bring them with you.

Get instructions – Ask your doctor how to prepare for an upcoming test or about the possible side effects. Remember to ask how long it will take for results and how you will be receiving them. Call the doctor's office if you have not received them after waiting a reasonable amount of time.



If medications are prescribed – Make sure you understand the directions about taking the medications. If something is not clear, be sure to ask before you leave. If cost is a concern, discuss this with your doctor.

