



Patient Question Checklist

Shift to advocate for your healthcare safety. Empower yourself with information and tools to help you ask good questions, connect with the right people, and learn as much as you can to keep you or a family member safe while receiving healthcare.

Before Your Appointment

- Ask someone to go to your appointment with you to help you understand and remember answers to your questions.
- Write down the questions you have for the visit.
- Create a health history that includes your current conditions and past surgeries or illnesses, as well as all your medications. Bring it to your appointment.
- Know your family's health history, such as your parents' medical conditions.
- Bring all your medicines with you, including prescriptions, non-prescription medicines (e.g., Aspirin, antacids), vitamins, and dietary or herbal supplements.
- If you need a test, ask:
 - How do you perform the test?
 - How will it feel?
 - What do I need to do to get ready for the test?
 - How will I get the results?
- If you require a prescription, tell your doctor if you are pregnant, are nursing, have reactions to medicines, or take vitamins or herbal supplements.
- Find out what to do next. Ask for written instructions, brochures, videos, websites.

After Your Appointment

- Always follow your doctor's instructions.
- If you do not understand your instructions after you get home, call your doctor.
- Talk with your healthcare provider or pharmacist before you stop taking any medicines that your doctor prescribed.
- Call your doctor if your symptoms get worse or if you have problems following the instructions.
- Make appointments to have tests done or see a specialist if you need to.
- Explain your symptoms, health history, and any problems with medicines you have taken in the past.
- Ask questions to make sure you understand what your doctor* is telling you.
- Let your doctor know if you are worried about being able to follow his or her instructions.
- If your doctor recommends a treatment, ask about options.
- Call your doctor's office to find out test results. Ask what you should do about the results.



My Questions for This Visit

Consider questions about past, present, and future medicines, medical tests, and surgeries.

What are the top three questions you want to be sure to ask during your appointment? List them here:

1. Question:

2. Question:

3. Question:

**The term “doctor” refers to an individual who helps you manage your healthcare.*

Additional resources

The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ), an agency within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, supports research that helps people make informed decisions and improves the quality of healthcare. AHRQ offers these free resources to help you make decisions about your healthcare:

Questions Are the Answer

www.ahrq.gov/questions

- This website lets you make a list of questions that you can bring to your medical appointments and gives you tips on talking with your doctor.

Patients & Consumers

www.ahrq.gov/patients-consumers/

- This page links to consumer information on staying healthy, getting high-quality healthcare, and more.