

10 Minutes with the Doctor

What!?! Only 10 minutes? The reality is, whether your appointment is for an urgent problem or a checkup for an ongoing condition, you may have only 10 minutes face-to-face with your doctor during your appointment. So, be prepared! **Bring with you:**

- ♥ A list of your medications and any allergies or sensitivities
- ♥ Your health history
- ♥ Notes about any specific problem you are having, such as how long you've had the problem and when or where it happens. (Don't rely on your memory)
- ♥ Notes on any health questions you already have
- ♥ Insurance cards
- ♥ Money for co-pay if applicable
- ♥ When seeing a specialist, request copies of laboratory and radiology reports to take with you or to be sent.



Usually a nurse or medical assistant will begin with some questions. Take advantage of this! He/she will note your reason for the visit, ask questions about your pain or discomfort, and review your health history. All information helps in your care!

When the doctor comes in, communicate with him/her as fully as you can.

Some important points:

Don't be embarrassed if you don't know medical terms. Plain words are usually best

for letting the doctor know what you are experiencing. Feel free to ask questions. If an exam causes pain or discomfort, let your doctor know. If you have memory problem or other difficulties, take a family member or close friend who is willing to assume some responsibility for helping you.

"Beloved, I pray that in all respects you may prosper and be in good health, just as your soul prospers." 3 John 1:2

Making the Most of Face-to-Face Time

Before the end of your visit, make sure of these things:

- ♥ You feel that your reason for the visit is addressed
- ♥ You understand what you need to do for any treatment prescribed by the doctor
- ♥ You know when you are to come back (It is usually best to make your follow-up appointment before you leave.)
- ♥ You understand why and when any lab tests, x-rays, other diagnostic tests will take place and how you will get the results. (If you do not receive the results, give the doctor's office a call.)
- ♥ You know if you are being referred to another doctor for additional care and the contact information for that doctor.

The 10 minutes of face-to-face time is not the only time of the doctor's care for you. Many things are happening afterwards. Make sure you receive all the information you need to help you maintain good health!

Ways to Utilize a Health History

A visit to the doctor involves providing your health history including dates of illnesses and any surgeries or other information that pertains to your health. It's a good idea to prepare and maintain a record of your family and past health history for more than just a doctor visit.

- *Make a copy of your health history for your emergency contact person or spouse, and keep a copy of his/hers with you.*
- *Give a copy of your health history to the person named on your Health Directive.*
- *Have your doctor's office make a copy for their files.*

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