

**PATIENT
INFORMATION**



**FROM
YOUR DOCTOR**

Talking to the doctor about medical problems

Communicating with your doctor is a two-way street. It's important for you to explain your medical problems clearly. And you should expect the doctor to ask you questions and tell you what is known about your condition. When you communicate well, you can accomplish a lot. Here are some ways to make communication easier.

QUESTIONS FOR YOUR DOCTOR

I am most concerned about

Symptoms _____

Pain _____

Medications _____

Other _____

- Collect your thoughts before you visit the doctor. Think about the symptoms that are bothering you. Sometimes it helps to make a list.
- Be on time for the appointment. You and your doctor will feel less rushed, and you will have more time to go over your concerns.
- Let the doctor know which medicines you're taking—including those you buy without a prescription. Take all of your medicines with you to show the doctor.
- Tell the doctor if you're upset or afraid because of your illness. Feel free to discuss confidential things. Your doctor will guard the confidential information carefully.
- Describe the worst symptoms first. There may not be time to cover everything in one visit.
- Be specific: Where are the symptoms located? What do they feel like? How have they troubled you? Did you ever have these symptoms before? Do any members of your family have problems like yours? Did you ever go to a hospital or have surgery because of the symptoms?
- Try to answer questions as carefully as you can. If you don't understand a question, ask the doctor to repeat it or ask it in a different way.
- Ask questions if you can't follow the doctor's explanations. You have a right to know what's happening to you.
- Discuss any diagnosis or treatment that you don't agree on. The doctor may be able to arrange a different way of dealing with the problem.
- Make an effort to remember and follow the doctor's instructions. Write them down if it will help you remember.
- Think of yourself and your doctor as partners. That way you'll get the most out of your visits.