

Fast Facts:
How to get ready for a
medical appointment

FAMILY  VOICES
COLORADO

FAST FACTS

Know the questions

Unless they are very sick, many people ask friends, family or coworkers or even casual acquaintances for help when it comes to medical appointments. In fact, less than half of people in the United States go to regular medical appointments. And when they do go, they avoid asking the important questions for fear or embarrassment.

But good communication is key. The doctor needs to know all your symptoms and medical history, including all medicines you take with or without prescription.

You also need to make sure you understand all the instructions the doctors gives you about treatment or prescriptions.

Good communication can help avoid medical errors and to get best results when you receive medical attention.

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Colorado Resource Directory

www.coloradoresourcedirectory.net

Communication is key

Talk to your doctor in details about your medical history, the medicines you are taking and any other issue or concern you might have even if it might be a bit embarrassing (they have seen it all).

Get ready for your appointment by writing down all the questions you want to ask the doctor. You can bring a family member or friend to your appointment for them to help you if you need it.

To obtain quality medical attention, you need to play an active role in all aspects of your health, including all testing and medical procedures.

Doctors order blood work, x-rays and other testing in order to identify any medical problem.

Obtain your test results

If your doctor orders a test, ask for your results. Do not assume everything is ok if you do not get a response from your doctor.

Call your doctor and request the results. Ask in which way your results affect your care and use that information to talk to your doctor and to make decisions about your care.

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Talk to your doctor. Make sure you give him or her all the details of your symptoms, concerns, your habits, and any other details you think might be helpful.

Ask questions. If you don't understand what your doctor is telling you, ask more questions, do research. Call your doctor again if you have more questions after your appointment.

Follow their instructions. Take your medicine according to the prescription and if you need to see another doctor or specialist, make the appointment.

Do the medical exams

Ask yourself

What is my diagnosis?

What is the technical name of my disease or condition?

What does it mean in a few words?

What is my prognosis and what can I expect for my future?

What changes do I have to make?

Is this a hereditary condition?

Will I need special assistance at home due to my condition?

Will I need to do more testing?

Where should I get more information or assistance from?

Is there treatment?

Are there any medical studies that might fit my condition?

Family Voices Colorado **Avoid Medical Errors**

- *Navigation*
- *Support*
- *Information*
- *Advocacy*

Programs currently funded through FVC

- Information, Referral and Training for Families and Professionals
- Family to Family Health Information Network
- Medical Home Initiative

Find reliable information

Get in touch with a group or organization that has information about your medical condition. You can also find information at your local library.

For additional information visit the Department of Human resources at www.colorado.gov/CDHS

www.familyvoicesco.org

The safety of the patient is one of the most important challenges now a days. Improving the quality of medical care and to reduce medical mistakes, is high priority for doctors

The most important step to can take to better your medical attention is to play an active role in your care. In order to do so, ask your doctor all the questions you have about your diagnosis, treatment, and medications. The answers can help you make better decisions, obtain a higher level of medical care, reduce mistakes, and to make you feel better over all about your medical care.

Understand your prescriptions

If your doctor prescribes any medication, make sure you mention if you are taking any other medicine, including over the counter medicines, vitamins or any other supplements. Also, you need to mention if you have ever taken the same medicine and had any allergic reactions or side effects.

When you get a new prescription, make sure you understand what your doctor is prescribing, why you need to take it and how often to take it.

When your doctor prescribes a new medication:

- Know the name and what it is for
- If its possible to substitute the medication with a generic so it can be more affordable
- What is the needed doses and if its needed to avoid any other medication, food or drink while taking it
- When you go get your medication ask the pharmacist?
 - Is there any information explain side effects
 - What does the label say– it it states take 3 times a day is that every 8 hours or after every meal
 - How you need to measure the medicine if it's a liquid.

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- Tell your doctor if you have complications with the medication or if you start taking any other medicines.
- Try to buy all the medicines at the same pharmacy so you have all your prescriptions in one place.
- Make you receive the right medicine
- Take all the medicine even if you are feeling better and you think you no longer need it.



- Do not give your medicine to anyone else.

Get support -it is normal to be worried about your condition

Take your time- Don't rush into making an important decision about your health

Get the support you need - look for your family 's support, friends and people that have been through or are going through something similar

Be careful– when you are learning about your health concerns and your treatment look for reliable information.

Make a decision with your doctor

Once you have learned evrting you can about your condition, you and your doctor can decide how to move forward. Take into consideration the risks and benefits of each treatment option and pick the one that you feel most comfortable with. When you finalize your decision, work with your doctor come up with a treatment plan, to stay up to date an know what your expectations are.