



How to Talk to Your Doctor

Many of us were brought up believing that the doctor is always right. It can be difficult to question or try to have two-way conversations with them. In today's complicated healthcare landscape this notion is not only outdated, but could be dangerous to your health. Taking the time to prepare for a doctor's visit can make it much easier to talk with-- and understand -- what your doctor is saying.

Doctor's appointments are a fact of life for us all, especially as we begin to age or face a health challenge of some kind. Taking a little bit of time to prepare for your next appointment will help to ensure that you get the most out of the visit, and leave understanding what the doctor has said and what you must do in order to feel better.



- 1 Bring health insurance and history information with you to each visit.** Always have your health insurance card with you, as the doctor may order testing or a form of treatment that may or may not be covered by your insurance carrier. The physician's staff can check on eligibility prior to the test or treatment being scheduled. Also, update your medical history regularly so that your doctor has all of the most recent information in front of him at every visit.



- 2 Write down symptoms and questions that you may have.** This is a great way of making sure that you don't forget to share a symptom with -- or ask a question of -- your doctor. It also may make it easier for the doctor to diagnosis your condition.



- 3 Take someone with you.** As they say, two heads are better than one! Having another person in the room will help you capture more of what the doctor says, and they may think of asking a question that you haven't. Obviously, you want the person who accompanies you to be a relative or close friend who you trust to be discreet.

(continue over)

**4**

Take all of your medications with you. It makes sense to have one physician, usually your family doctor, who monitors all of the medications that you are taking. For this reason, take all of your prescription medications, vitamins and herbal supplements along with you to each visit. This will help prevent a possible negative drug interaction and your doctor can get clarification on the necessity of continuing certain treatments based upon his findings.

**5**

Write it down. Don't be embarrassed to take notes, or to tape record a visit if you feel that it will help you understand your condition and/or treatment instructions better. Taking a leading role in your health and wellbeing is something that each of us should do!

**6**

Keep asking. Ask as many questions as you need to in order to understand what the doctor is telling you. Don't worry if you have to ask a question more than once. Remember, you didn't go to medical school, so you may not automatically understand everything the doctor says the first time. Ask for clarification and then repeat it using words that you understand, asking your physician to confirm that what you are saying is correct.

**7**

Ask for additional information. Most physician's have additional information, such as brochures, fact sheets and/or written instructions about certain health conditions and treatment options. Ask for it. Be sure to read it carefully and call the office if you have any additional questions that your doctor or the literature didn't answer for you.

**COVENANT HOME CARE**www.covenanthc.org**Bringing comfort care home.****1223 Pottsville Pike • Shoemakersville, PA 19555****1-800-726-8761**

One number for all of your homecare needs.