

Primary Care

Schedule your Well Visit

It's time to take charge of your health! Schedule an appointment with your health care provider to discuss what screenings and exams you need and when you need them. Regular health exams and tests can help find problems before they start. By getting the right health services, screenings, and treatments, you are taking steps that help your chances for living a longer, healthier life.

Getting the Most from your PCP

Getting check-ups is one of the many things you can do to help stay healthy and prevent disease and disability. Before your next check-up make sure to review your family health history, find out if you are due for any general screenings or vaccinations and write down a list of questions to take with you.

Questions to help you start:

- What do you call my health problems?
- What do I have to do to feel better?
- Did I tell you all of the things I am doing or taking to help me feel better?
- What could happen if I don't do what you suggest?
- Do I need to change my daily routine?
- Do I need to see any other doctors?
- What are my treatment options?
 - What are the benefits of each option?
 - What are the side effects?
 - How will it make me feel?
- What will the medicine you are prescribing do?
 - How do I take it?
 - Are there any side effects?
 - When do I stop taking it?
- When should I return for my next appointment?

Be honest with your provider. If you haven't been taking your medication as directed, exercising as much, or anything else, say so. You may be at risk for certain diseases and conditions because of how you live, work, and play. Your provider develops a plan based partly on what you say you do. Help ensure that you get the best guidance by providing the most up-to-date and accurate information about you.

How to Prepare for your Next Appointment

Before your Appointment:

- You can make sure you get the best possible care by being an active member of your health care team. Being involved means being prepared and asking questions.
- Preparing questions about your diagnoses, treatments and medicines can improve quality, safety, and effectiveness of your health care.

During your Appointment:

- Go over your health history and any symptoms you may have
- Make sure to ask the questions you prepared before your appointment. Start by asking the ones that are the most important to you.
 - To get the most from your visit, tell the nurse or person at the front desk that you have questions for your doctor. If your doctor does not ask you if you have questions, ask your doctor when the best time would be to ask them.
- Make sure that you understand the answers and next steps
 - Take notes or bring someone to your appointment to help you understand or remember what you heard. If you don't understand or are confused, ask your doctor to explain the answer again.

After your Appointment:

- Follow any written procedures your doctor provided to you to keep your health on track
- If you have doubts or concerns call your doctor to clarify anything you don't understand
- Other times to call your doctor:
 - If you experience any side effects or other problems with your medicines
 - If your symptoms get worse
 - If you receive any new prescriptions or start taking over-the-counter medicines
 - To get results of any tests you had
 - To ask about test results you don't understand

References:

Center for Disease Control and Prevention (2015, April 01). Health Equity-Family Health. Retrieved from <https://www.cdc.gov/family/checkup/index.htm>

Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality. (2012, September 26). Questions To Ask Your Doctor. Retrieved from <https://www.ahrq.gov/patients-consumers/patient-involvement/ask-your-doctor/index.html>