



## PATIENT TIP SHEET TO GUIDE IN-OFFICE VISITS

With some preparation, your doctor's appointment can be more productive and less stressful for you. It's all about partnering with your doctor to get what you need from each interaction. You are your own advocate and any healthcare professional will be glad you are actively participating in your care. Here are some simple steps:



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### Find the Right Doctor

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First and foremost, do you like your doctor? Do you respect and trust him/her? Are you comfortable sharing embarrassing information with him/her? You are managing a chronic condition. The partnership between you and your doctor is a critical component in your long-term success.



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### Make a List

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If you had an important business meeting coming up, you'd prepare ahead of time. This is your health care, which may be the most important thing ever. So do some homework and keep a list of all of your questions, symptoms, issues and anything that has changed. Not only will this help make sure you cover all the topics you want to cover, but it helps alleviate stress. So keep track of all the questions you want to ask – and prioritize them. If the visit is cut short, did you ask the most important questions first? Organization will give you what you need during the limited time you have with your doctor.



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### Share Your Information

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Have you had any new tests? Are you on any new medications for other conditions? Your primary care physician and neurologist may not be talking regularly. You need to make sure to keep your own records and ensure that your health care team has what they need. You're in this together!



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### Get a Head Start

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Is there any paperwork you can complete before you leave the house? Ask the office receptionist. Otherwise, make sure to show up a few minutes early to your appointment.



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### Repeat to Make Sure You Understand

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Doctors can give you a lot of complicated information – often using medical terminology. It's important that you leave the appointment feeling like you fully understand what was communicated. A helpful trick is to repeat what he/she says in your own words and confirm that it's accurate. This is information about your health – you and your doctor are a team. Ask yourself, will I be able to explain what the doctor said to me to my friends and family? Until the answer is yes, keep talking to your doctor.