



TIPS

from the Consumer Health Action Network

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Preparing for a Doctor's Appointment

Before the visit:

- Write down all your questions, the medications you are taking, and any symptoms you are having.
- Call to confirm your transportation.
- Bring paper and a pen to make notes.

At the appointment:

- Arrive on time, but understand that you may have to wait
- Check in at the front desk.
- Be truthful – doctors are trained to be discreet, but they cannot help you if you don't tell them what they need to know.
- Take notes including answers to your questions and your next steps.
 - ✓ *Do you need to get a test? Where? When?*
 - ✓ *Do you need to fill a prescription?*
 - ✓ *Do you need to see another doctor? Will they make the appointment or will you?*
 - ✓ *Do you need to schedule another visit? When? For what?*
- Be sure you completely understand what you are supposed to do:
 - ✓ *How to take any medications.*
 - ✓ *Any lifestyle changes you need to make (eating, exercising or smoking habits).*
- If there is anything that you don't understand, ask your doctor to explain it to you. They want you to understand.

After the visit:

- Look over your notes and be sure you understand everything. If you have any questions, call your provider and ask.
- Get any prescriptions. Take them as directed.
- Update your calendar with any new appointments.
- Call for any test results.
- Put your notes with your other medical records.