

Tips for patients to engage in their care



How you and your provider can work together

1. Understand that health care should be a partnership among you, your caregivers and family, and providers.
2. Be respectful of each other. Your provider is an expert in medicine, and you are an expert in you.
3. Take an active part in your health care.
4. Prepare for your visit. Read about your condition, review your record, and make a list of questions.
5. Talk openly. If you don't feel like your provider is listening, find another one.
6. Be respectful of your provider's time. Inform your provider at the beginning of the visit if the focus of your appointment needs to change.
7. Take notes, and get copies of your provider's notes. Enroll in MyChart, your portal to your electronic health record.
8. Discuss tests and treatments together and make a decision that leaves you feeling comfortable.
9. Keep in touch. If your provider asks you to follow-up, do it. Expect the same from him or her.
10. Give and receive feedback, both good and bad. Partnerships work when all those involved know where the other stands.

Want to take control of your health? Be an engaged patient.

Let your provider know that you care about your health and that you want to understand exactly what is going on with your body. Listen, do your homework and ask questions. Here are some simple ones to get you started:

1. What is my diagnosis? *Make sure you understand it.*
2. What are the treatment options? *Get the benefits and side effects of each option.*
3. Will I need medication? *Get the benefits and side effects of your medications too.*
4. Will new medications interact with my current medications? *Always have an updated list of your medications with you.*
5. Do we need to run any tests or do any procedures? *As always, weigh the pros and cons. Make sure you talk about all options.*
6. When will I get the test results? *Make a plan to follow-up.*
7. Is any surgery involved? *Talk about alternatives.*
8. Are there any support groups or patients with my condition that I can talk to? *Find out how many patients with similar conditions your provider has treated and see if he/she has suggestions for support.*
9. Do I need to change my daily routine or lifestyle? *Eating, work and sleep habits may need to change.*
10. What are the next steps? *Always have a plan. Be sure to ask for suggested internet sites where you can do research on your condition.*

For more information

Visit VidantHealth.com/patientandfamilycenteredcare.

To build a custom set of questions for your appointment, visit ahrq.gov/legacy/questions/qb.