Making the most of your medical visit

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How do your medical visits usually go?

A question to get started...
How do your provider visits usually go?

A. It’s all over in a flash and whoosh I am out the door!

B. Things are rushed but I am able to take care of the most important things.

C. I have enough time to cover all of my questions.

D. My provider and I have all the time in the world (ha ha ha!!)

WE ALL HAVE LIMITED TIME WITH OUR PROVIDERS — PLAN ACCORDINGLY
Making the most of your medical visit: Outline

1. Self-Advocacy
2. Be Prepared!
3. Be Honest
4. Effective Communication
YOUR HEALTH JOURNEY

Identity change (Going from a “well” person to a “sick” person)

Learning the language and terminology of the medical world

Self-advocacy: Short-term goals, intermediate goals, long-term goals

Not to mention all the insurance issues!
Visits with Providers

- Many important discussions and decisions take place at your medical visits
- How do you leverage that time to make the most of it?
Self-Advocacy

• What is self-advocacy?
• What does effective self-advocacy look like?
• What are the barriers to self-advocacy?
Self-Advocacy

Are you a good advocate for your own health and well being?

Are you a better advocate for your family members? If so, why?

What would your loved ones say about your level of assertiveness?

Do you want to improve? In what way? How can you do this?

Advocating for yourself is super hard. Especially when you’re sick.
Self-Advocacy Rating

What level resonates with you at this point in your journey?

Level 1: Disengaged and Overwhelmed
- My doctor is in charge of my health.

Level 2: Becoming Aware but Still Struggling
- I could be doing more for my health.

Level 3: Taking Action and Gaining Control
- I'm part of my health care team.

Level 4: Maintaining Behaviors and Pushing Further
- I'm my own health advocate.

Working with Providers: Be Prepared!
Be prepared with the key information for your provider.

Providers interrupt their patients on average after only 12 seconds.

If you stick to the relevant details, the doctor will listen to you more closely.
Provider visits – You’ve only got 15 min – make it count!

The basics. Make sure you have these ready to go:

• list of medications, refills, lab tests you need to schedule/discuss

• your main goals for the appointment (no more than 3!)

• summary of how you are doing (be brief and HONEST)

• any problems (side effects, insurance, expenses, ANYTHING that is stopping you from carrying out the treatment plan)

• list of any questions you have that only the doctor can answer

Sit down before you go to the appointment and prepare for the visit.
Telehealth Visits

• Is telehealth safe and appropriate for me?
  - If you are experiencing new symptoms, let your provider know! They may want to switch to in person

• Do I feel comfortable with using the telehealth technology?
What if things get tense? What if we have a disagreement?

How do I approach this with my provider?
What if I can’t do or don’t want to do what my provider is asking?

What should I do?

PRACTICE HOW YOU WILL RESPOND IN AN HONEST AND RESPECTFUL MANNER
Working with Providers:

Are you honest?
Doctor: How are you doing?

You: What is your response?

A. I’m ok.
B. I’m ok (well, sort of).
C. I’m ok (I’m really not ok).
D. I’m not ok.

Do you do this?

If you are not being honest with your provider then how can they help you?
Working with Providers:

Effective Communication
Effective Communication: Is your provider listening?

Providers can’t do two things at once.

Don’t talk while the provider is typing or looking in your chart, just wait until they look up at you so you know you have their full attention.
What are some things you can do if you think your provider is not listening to you?

How can you build a better relationship with your provider?
What are some things you can do if you think your provider is not listening to you?

How can you build a better relationship with your provider?
Is your provider listening to you?

“If you feel like your doctor is not listening to you, you are probably right.”

Find another provider. Now.
Can we talk about second opinions?

How do I approach this with my provider?
What will they think about this?
Can we talk about second opinions?

How do I approach this with my provider?
What will they think about this?
LET’S ASK THE PROVIDER

The Breakup.

How do I break up with my doctor?

NO ONE WANTS THIS OUTCOME
BUT SOMETIMES IT MAY BE FOR THE BEST
The Breakup.

How do I break up with my doctor?

NO ONE WANTS THIS OUTCOME
BUT SOMETIMES IT MAY BE FOR THE BEST
Effective Communication:
MAKE SURE YOU COVER
THE MOST IMPORTANT THING FIRST!
Do you do this? THE COLUMBO.

Don’t do this to your doctor!

“Just one more thing”

Hey Doc, I forgot to mention that I was coughing up blood the other day...
SOME TAKE HOME POINTS:

• Prepare for your visits
• Think about your needs and goals
• Practice how you will answer your provider
• Communication is key!
Self-Advocacy Rating

WHERE DO YOU WANT TO BE?

Level 1
DISENGAGED AND OVERWHELMED
"My doctor is in charge of my health."

Level 2
BECOMING AWARE BUT STILL STRUGGLING
"I could be doing more for my health."

Level 3
TAKING ACTION AND GAINING CONTROL
"I'm part of my health care team."

Level 4
MAINTAINING BEHAVIORS AND PUSHING FURTHER
"I'm my own health advocate."

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Level 1

**DISENGAGED AND OVERWHELMED**

"My doctor is in charge of my health."

Individuals are passive and lack confidence. Knowledge is low, goal-orientation is weak, and adherence is poor.

**Healthcare utilization:**
Very high ED/ER use, very high risk of Ambulatory Care Sensitive (ACS) utilization, very high risk of readmission, very low use of preventive care and screens.

Level 2

**BECOMING AWARE BUT STILL STRUGGLING**

"I could be doing more for my health."

Individuals have some knowledge, but large gaps remain. They believe health is largely out of their control, but can set simple goals.

**Healthcare utilization:**
High ED/ER use, high risk of ACS utilization, high risk of readmission, low use of preventive care and screens.

Level 3

**TAKING ACTION AND GAINING CONTROL**

"I'm part of my health care team."

Individuals have the key facts and are building self-management skills. They strive for best practice behaviors, and are goal-oriented.

**Healthcare utilization:**
Low ED/ER use, low risk of ACS utilization, low risk of readmission, good use of preventive care and screens.

Level 4

**MAINTAINING BEHAVIORS AND PUSHING FURTHER**

"I'm my own health advocate."

Individuals have adopted new behaviors, but may struggle in times of stress or change. Maintaining a healthy lifestyle is a key focus.

**Healthcare utilization:**
Very low ED/ER use, very low risk of ACS utilization, very low risk of readmission, very good use of preventive care and screens.