

Be Prepared for Medical Appointments

Build Your Question List



Did your clinician give you a prescription?

What is the name of the medicine?

How do you spell the name?

Can I take a generic version of this medicine?

What is the medicine for?

How am I supposed to take it?

When should I take my medicine?

How much medicine should I take?

How long do I need to take the medicine?

When will the medicine start working?

Can I stop taking my medicine if I feel better?

Can I get a refill?

Are there any side effects?

When should I tell someone about a side effect?

Do I need to avoid any food, drinks, or activities?

Does this new prescription mean I should stop taking any other medicines I'm taking now?

Can I take vitamins with my prescription?

What should I do if I forget to take my medicine?

What should I do if I accidentally take more than the recommended dose?

Is there any written information I can take home with me?

Are there any tests I need to take while I'm on this medicine?

Are you scheduled to have medical tests?

What is the test for?

How is the test done?

Will the test hurt?

Are you scheduled to have medical tests? (cont'd)

- Are there any side effects?

- How accurate is the test?

- Is this test the only way to find out that information?

- What are the benefits and risks of having this test?

- What do I need to do to prepare for the test?

- How many times have you performed the test?

- When will I get the results?

- What will the results tell me?

- What's the next step after the test?

Did you recently receive a diagnosis?

- What is my diagnosis?

- What is the technical name of my disease or condition, and what does it mean in plain English?

- What is my prognosis (outlook for the future)?

- What changes will I need to make?

- Is there a chance that someone else in my family might get the same condition?

- Will I need special help at home for my condition?

- Is there any treatment?

- What are my treatment options?

- How soon do I need to make a decision about treatment?

- What are the benefits and risks associated with my treatment options?

- Is there a clinical trial (research study) that is right for me?

- Will I need any additional tests?

- What organizations and resources do you recommend for support and information?



Are you considering treatment for an illness or condition?

- What are my treatment options?

- What do you recommend?

- Is the treatment painful?

- How can the pain be controlled?

- What are the benefits and risks of this treatment?

How much does this treatment cost?

Will my health insurance cover the treatment?

What are the expected results?

When will I see results from the treatment?

What are the chances the treatment will work?

Are there any side effects?

What can be done about them?

How soon do I need to make a decision about treatment?

What happens if I choose to have no treatment at all?

Did your clinician recently recommend surgery?

Why do I need surgery?

What kind of surgery do I need?

What will you be doing?

What are the benefits and risks of having this surgery?

Have you done this surgery before?

How successful is this surgery?

Which hospital is best for this surgery?

Will the surgery hurt?

Will I need anesthesia?

How long will the surgery take?

How long will it take me to recover?

How long will I be in the hospital?

What will happen after the surgery?

How much will the surgery cost?

Will my health insurance cover the surgery?

Is there some other way to treat my condition?

What will happen if I wait or don't have this surgery?

Where can I get a second opinion?



Are you choosing a health plan?

- What are my options?
- Does this health plan provide the benefits and services I need?
- Does this health plan offer the clinicians and hospitals I want?
- Can I afford this health plan?

Are you choosing a clinician?

- Is this clinician part of my health plan?
- Does this clinician have the background and training I need?
- Is this clinician able to work at the hospital I like?
- Can I talk to this clinician and ask questions easily?
- Does this clinician listen to me?
- Does this clinician wash his or her hands between examining each patient?

Are you choosing a hospital?

- Which hospital has the best care for my condition?
- Is this hospital covered by my health insurance?

- Does the hospital meet national quality standards?
- How does the hospital compare with others in my area?
- Has the hospital had success with treating my condition?
- Does my clinician have privileges (is allowed to work) at this hospital?
- How well does the hospital check and improve on its own quality of care?

Are you choosing long-term care?

- What kind of services do I need?
- What are my care options?
- Will my health insurance cover long-term care?
- Will this facility meet my needs?
- How is this care facility rated?

For more information, go to:
www.ahrq.gov

