

TAKING CHARGE OF YOUR CARE

Self-Advocacy for Communicating with Your Healthcare Team



Good communication with your healthcare team may help you get the kind of MG treatment you need and want. Use this worksheet to help identify potential communication barriers and strategies for overcoming them.

1 First, think about your goals

Which communication skill do you most want to improve when it comes to your doctor's appointments? There are a few examples below to help kickstart your thinking and space to write more reasons of your own.

- Sharing specifics about my symptoms
- Feeling comfortable asking questions about my care
- Being more assertive if I don't feel like my concerns or goals are being heard
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

2 Now, think about potential barriers

Think back to a doctor's appointment you wish had gone differently—what are some of the reasons you may not have spoken up?

- The doctor used a lot of jargon I didn't understand—it was hard to know what I wanted to ask
- I had trouble organizing my thoughts
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Getting past your barriers at an appointment

Now that you've reflected on your potential communication barriers, try brainstorming a few ways you might overcome them in this imaginary scenario.

Let's say your doctor comes into the exam room and jumps right into reviewing your lab work without asking how you're doing. You were hoping to share symptom updates. How could you respond?

Write out a few ideas for things you might say to help ensure you're heard.

- Before we continue, could I _____?
- I understand that labs are important, but I'd like to share _____



- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Some strategies to think about

Remember, time is limited, so it's important to get to the point! Here are a few ways you might redirect the conversation if you feel you're getting off track:

- If you feel the discussion is veering off track, try to refocus. You can say!
 - *"It's important to me to be able to give you the full picture here."*
 - *"I feel we may be stuck on one symptom. I want to make sure you have all the information to consider before we move forward."*
- If you don't feel like all your concerns are being heard, try saying!
 - *"Are you following what I'm trying to explain? I want to make sure we're on the same page."*
 - *"It took a lot for me to be here today, so I want to make sure you understand my symptoms..."*
- If you want to better understand your doctor's reasoning, try asking!
 - *"Can you explain what you're thinking about that _____ (symptom, treatment, etc.)?"*
 - *"What are my next steps here? What do you recommend I do to feel better?"*

Reference

1. Wen L, et al. St. Martin's Press. 2013.