

PREPARING FOR YOUR DOCTOR'S VISIT

Each month Lytle Personal Health Partners will provide an article from the series, The Educated Patient. The focus is to educate and empower the patient as they navigate the health care field.

First stop in the series is "Preparing for Your Doctor's Visit". In the past, patients would make an appointment, see the physician and exit with their prescriptions. No questions asked. Now, patients are involved and are acknowledged as key players to their diagnosis and treatment. Many questions are asked. The following guideline may be used in your next visit.

1. In making an appointment, be specific, what is the reason for your visit? Ask what is the normal time allotted for a visit? If you require more time, let the office know or make another appointment.
2. If you are meeting a new physician or specialist, make sure that your medical records have been faxed to the office.
3. When meeting a new physician, make sure that your family medical history is accurate and up to date.
4. Make sure that you have a list prepared of all of the medications including over the counter. If you are unable to prepare a list, make sure that you bring them with you in a zip lock bag.
5. If the visit is due to illness, have you documented the symptoms? Make sure that the symptoms are noted along with the length of time that you have been feeling bad. If you are experiencing pain, make sure to number the intensity of pain, (1 being less-10 being constant), and the frequency of the pain.
6. Bring a notebook and pen, and a friend or relative so that there is clear understanding of treatment, prescriptions and diagnosis.
7. Bring you insurance card. Contact your insurance provider prior to your appointment to make sure the visit is covered. Never assume that appointments or treatments are covered.
8. Arrive about 15 -20 minutes before your appointment to complete paperwork, and to relax. If you are one of those individuals that are afraid to see the doctor, then you may have "doctor phobia". Doctor phobia can make your blood pressure rise, so it is important to have time to relax and compose your thoughts.
9. When you sign in at the desk, review all personal and insurance information. Advise the receptionist of any changes to insurance.
10. After your visit, make sure that a follow up appointment has been scheduled and that you have a clear understanding of your diagnosis and treatment.



The second part of the "Educated Patient Series" will focus on questions to ask your physician during the appointment.

