

Know what to ask

Questions to get the most out of your healthcare

The best way to get the most out of your healthcare is to ask questions.

This is your chance to get all the information you need, so you can understand your treatment and know about your tests or medicine.

If you're not sure what to ask, here are some **questions** to get you started.

Use them to think about what you want to ask your health professional before, during and after your treatment.

Remember to...

1. Speak up if you have questions or concerns.
2. Call your doctor if you think there has been an error in any treatment or medication.
3. Make sure that all of your doctors know about every medicine you are taking.
4. Bring all of your medicines and supplements (or a list of their names and doses) to your doctor visits.
5. Make sure your doctor knows about any allergies and adverse reactions you have had to medicines.
6. When your doctor writes a prescription for you, make sure you can read it.
7. Ask your pharmacist if the medicine provided is the same as the doctor prescribed.
8. If you have any questions about the directions on medication labels – ask.
9. Make sure someone, such as your primary care doctor, coordinates your care.
10. Make sure all your doctors have your important health information.
11. Ask a family member or friend to go to appointments with you, for support or to translate if needed.
12. If you have a test, follow up to get the results.
13. Make sure you understand the results of your tests. Ask your doctor to explain anything you don't understand.
14. Learn about your condition and treatments by asking questions of doctors, nurses or other relevant medical professionals.
15. Let your doctor know about the environment you're going back to i.e. work, home.

Treatment questions

- What is my disease or condition?
- How serious is the condition?
- What is the long-term outlook?
- What caused the problem?
- What are my treatment options, and what do you recommend?
- Do I really need this treatment; is there a simpler/safer option?
- What are the risks with the treatment?
- What are the side effects of this treatment?
- What symptoms should I watch for?
- Is there more than one condition that could cause this symptom?
- What happens if I choose to delay or not have treatment?
- Will I need any more tests?
- Will I need special help at home?
- How soon do I need to make a decision about the treatment?

What caused the problem?



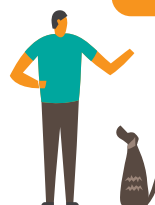
Surgery questions

- Why do I need surgery?
- What kind of surgery do I need?
- Do I really need this surgery, is there a simpler treatment option?
- What will happen if I wait or don't have this surgery?
- How long will I be in hospital?
- Will I need an anaesthetic?
- What will happen after the surgery?
- How long will it take me to recover?
- Does everyone agree this is the right thing to do?

Test questions

- What is the test for?
- How is the test done?
- How safe and accurate is the test?
- Is the test the only way to find the information we are looking for?
- What do I need to do to prepare for the test?
- When will I get the results and what will they tell me?
- What's the next step after the test?

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



Medicine questions

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



- What is the name of the medicine?
- What is the medicine for?
- What should I do if I take more than the recommended dose?
- How long do I need to take the medicine for?
- Do I need to avoid any food, drinks, supplements or activities?
- What should I do if I forget to take my medicine?
- Is there written information I can have on this medication?
- How do I take this medication? (e.g. is it a pill, drops, etc)
- How often do I need to take it?