

7. Planning future appointments:

Try to stick to one doctor.

Ask for a double appointment for a complicated problem.

Wear loose clothing if you are likely to be examined.

Make a separate appointment for each family member.



Do some background reading on www.patient.co.uk and watch Dr Sarah Jarvis on “How to make the most of GP appointments.”

Other sources of information:

www.nhs.uk “Questions to Ask the Doctor”

www.netdoctor.co.uk

www.saga.co.uk

Doctors would really like longer appointments too. We know how difficult it is to make an appointment and we are constantly trying to improve access.

Please talk about this leaflet with your friends, family and neighbours so that we all :

Get the Most Out of Your GP Appointment



How to Get the Most Out of Your GP Appointment

1. Plan what you want to talk about:

Patients are booked in at 10 minute intervals. Make the most of that time.

Write your problems down, with the most important one at the top.



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Show the doctor your list at the start of the appointment.

Try to stick to one problem in each appointment – the GP is much more likely to sort a single problem out properly. They are less likely to miss something or get the wrong end of the stick and you are more likely to remember the important things they have said.

2. Tell your doctor what you think is wrong:



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Tell your doctor at the beginning of the consultation.

Be honest - then they will know what you are most worried about.

3. Plan what you are going to say:



Tell your GP if you feel embarrassed talking about your problem.

Describe your symptoms – the aches, pains or feelings you have.....

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When did they start.....

What have you tried so far.....

What has helped / makes things worse.....

How has it affected what you can do.....

Are you taking any other medicines or supplements.....

4. Tell your doctor what you are expecting them to do:

- Diagnosis, discussion, reassurance
- Advice on where to find more information or what you can do to help yourself
- A prescription
- Blood tests or Xrays
- Referral to the hospital?



5. Ask questions and take notes

Do You Know ?
the Right Questions to Ask

- 1 What is the test for?
- 2 How many times have you done this procedure?
- 3 When will I get the results?
- 4 Why do I need this treatment?
- 5 Are there any alternatives?
- 6 What are the possible complications?
- 7 Which hospital is best for my needs?
- 8 How do you spell the name of that drug?
- 9 Are there any side effects?
- 10 Will this medicine interact with medicines that I'm already taking?

[Print these 10 Questions](#)

[Build Your Own List of Questions](#)

It can be difficult to remember what the doctor has told you. Take notes or ask a friend to come in with you.

Ask for important words to be written down and explained.

Don't be afraid to ask questions - especially if there is something you don't understand.

If the doctor is suggesting you do something you'll find difficult – tell them.

6. At the end of the consultation:



Check that you've asked the most important questions on your list and that you are clear about:

What happens next?

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What will you need to do?

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What is the doctor going to do?

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