

The Five-Point Plan

Talk With Your Doctor

"Don't just bring your children in when they are sick. At the yearly exam, we address the child globally... What that means is that we talk about more than their physical health: how they are doing in school, grades and how they are developing personally."

*– Dr. Frank Meza,
Kaiser Permanente, Family Medicine*



When you visit the doctor, think of it as visiting a family friend. It's much more than a checkup; it's a time to catch up on what is happening in your life. Treat your doctor like a friend: Tell your doctor about your work, school, relationships, neighborhood and friends. It could be important – especially if you have a medical condition – for your doctor to know about other parts of your life.

Sometimes doctors do all the talking while you do all the listening. Do you forget to ask questions or feel embarrassed when you don't understand? The good news is that you can change that by talking about your life – and the doctor will appreciate you taking an active role in your health discussion. On the following pages you will find tips to make your visit more helpful and meaningful.



Like with any friend, be honest. Don't hold back information that you may think is private or embarrassing.

Often we bring family members or close friends to the doctor – and that is helpful. They can listen and support you in following health instructions. Also, they may have experiences that can help you understand what the doctor says.

Sample Questions to Ask Your Doctor:

- How is my weight for my height and age?
- What are the types of cholesterol and how am I doing?
- How do I know if I am at risk for diabetes?
- How is my blood pressure?
- When should I come back for a checkup?
- What would be a good exercise routine for me?
- How and when do I take the medicine that's been prescribed?

Reminder: Take this reference guide and/or a notebook to write down these and other questions and answers when you visit your doctor!

Your Doctor May Need to Know About:

- Your work
- What types of food you eat when you are at work and home
- Your exercise habits (What and how much?)
- Where you live (Do you like where you live? Why/Why not?)
- If you live alone or with others (Are the others healthy?)
- Your transportation (Do you sit in traffic much, take public transportation or walk to work or school?)

Checklist for Your Trip to The Doctor:

- Call the doctor's office in advance if you need an interpreter
- Plan for any transportation issues you might have
- Arrange for someone you trust to go with you
- If you're not feeling well, make a list of your symptoms and remember to take it with you
- Make a list of any medicines you take; write down the doses and how often you take them; include vitamins and other supplements
- Arrive early in case you have to fill out forms
- Take your insurance card