

Healthcare Access & Rights



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Session Overview: HEALTHCARE ACCESS & RIGHTS

Say: Thank you for agreeing to meet with me today. If it's okay with you, I'd like to spend a few minutes sharing with you some information about accessing quality healthcare that I hope you will find helpful. If at any time you have questions, please stop me and I'll do my best to answer them. Ready to get started?

HEALTHCARE ACCESS & RIGHTS

Today's Topics:

- ✓ Doctor-Patient Relationship
- ✓ Before Your Appointment
- ✓ During Your Appointment
- ✓ After Your Appointment
- ✓ Patient Bill of Rights
- ✓ Accessing Quality & Affordable Care

Personal Experience with Healthcare Access

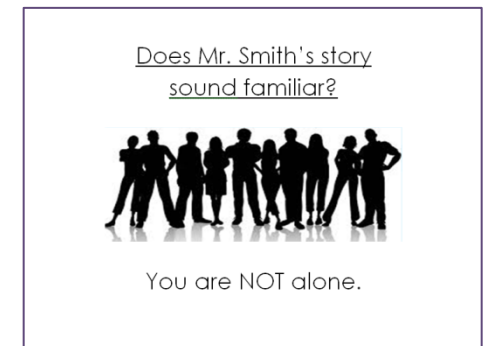
Say: Before we start talking today, I want to read for you a short story:

Mr. Smith has been feeling more tired than usual and has had several bad headaches. He has a family history of high blood pressure and diabetes, and is worried that his blood pressure may be high. He calls to schedule an appointment with this doctor's office, and is told that the next appointment is not for another two weeks. He takes the appointment, waits two weeks, and on the day of the appointment waits an hour to see his primary care doctor, Dr. Jones. When he finally gets to see Dr. Jones, he forgets to tell him about his headaches and only mentions being more tired. Dr. Jones spends about five minutes talking to Mr. Smith and examining him, and then says:

"No hypertension, glucose levels of some concern, triglycerides look okay, but your LDL is a bit high so I'm going to put you on statins and we'll see how that goes. Let's have you do labs in another week, and come back in six months."

After the appointment, Mr. Smith feels like he doesn't know any more than he did when he went in, and doesn't understand what the new prescribed medication is for.

Ask: Does Mr. Smith's story sound familiar? If so, you are not alone. Many people have a hard time getting and understanding the health information they need.



Does Mr. Smith's story
sound familiar?



You are NOT alone.

Doctor - Patient Relationship

Say: A major reason people have a hard time with health information is that it is often very complex. A lot of health information involves unfamiliar words and lots of numbers. In addition, short visits with doctors, nurses and pharmacists make it difficult to get answers to all your questions. Finding, understanding, and talking about health information is necessary to make sense of today's healthcare system and maintain good health. During today's workshop, we will discuss one way to make using the healthcare system a little easier to use. That technique is based on building a relationship with your doctors, nurses, pharmacists, and dentists by asking the right questions and engaging with them in your care as a team. After today's workshop, I hope you leave here better informed and ready to ask questions, and encourage other people in your life to become more active about their health.

Say: Let's think about the doctor-patient relationship. On one side, you have the patient – that's you or the person you're caring for. No one knows you better than yourself, right? You know best what you eat, how much you exercise, and what medicines you take. Also, you are probably the one with greatest self-interest in trying to be healthy. On the other side is the doctor, or the nurse, or the pharmacist. They have years of education, experience and want you to be healthy. However, they are busy, see many patients and can only spend a limited amount of time with each person. The good news is that there are things you can do to help your doctor do his or her job and maximize your understanding and chances of getting the help you want.

Ask: How confident do you feel talking to your doctor and asking questions?



The Doctor-Patient Relationship



Before Your Appointment

Say: Asking questions about your diagnoses, treatments, and medicines can improve the quality, safety, and results of your health care. Taking steps before your medical appointments will help you to make the most of your time with your doctor and health care team. Time is limited during doctor visits. Prepare for your appointment by taking the following three steps:

First, think about what you want to do during your next visit. Ask yourself, do you want to:

- Talk about a health problem?
- Get a new medicine or change a current medicine?
- Get medical tests?
- Talk about surgery or treatment options?

Write down your questions to bring to your appointment. The answers can help you make better decisions, get good care, and feel better about your health care.

Second, ask someone to go to your appointment with you to help you understand and remember answers to your questions. Having a friend or family member in the room may also make you feel more confident to speak up and ask questions.

Third, bring your medications with you, in case the doctor or nurse has questions about what you are taking and/or how you are taking it. Having your medications with you can also help if the doctor asks you to stop taking a medication. You can then make a note to yourself to remember which medication to stop and for how long.

Before Your Appointment

- 1 Think about what you want to talk about during the visit and write down all of your questions.
- 2 Bring a family member or friend to help support you.
- 3 Bring your medications to the appointment. Make sure you know what medications you are taking and why you are taking them.



Before Your Appointment

1

Think about what you want to talk about during the visit and write down all of your questions.

2

Bring a family member or friend to help support you.

3

Bring your medications to the appointment. Make sure you know what medications you are taking and why you are taking them.



During Your Appointment

Say: During your appointment, make sure to ask the questions you prepared beforehand. Start by asking the ones that are most important to you. To get the most from your visit, tell the nurse or person at the front desk that you have questions for your doctor. If your doctor does not ask you if you have questions, ask your doctor when the best time would be to ask them. The questions you may want to ask will depend on whether your doctor gives you a diagnosis, recommends a treatment, medical test, or surgery, or gives you a prescription for medicine. [can provide several examples]

Questions to ask if your doctor gives you a diagnosis:

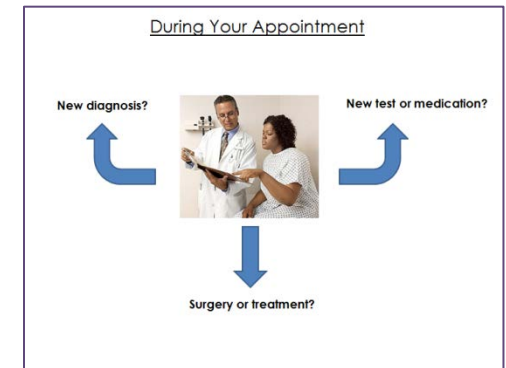
- ✓ What is my diagnosis?
- ✓ What are my treatment options? What are the benefits of each option?
- ✓ What are risks and side effects?

Questions to ask if your doctor recommends a test or medicine:

- ✓ What is the test for? What happens during the test?
- ✓ Are there risks associated with this test? What will the results tell me?
- ✓ What will the medicine you are prescribing do? How do I take it?
- ✓ What side effects am I most likely to have?
- ✓ What do I do if the medicine causes problems or doesn't seem to work?

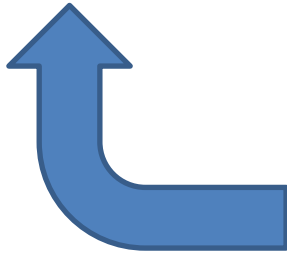
Questions to ask if your doctor recommends a surgery:

- ✓ Why do I need surgery?
- ✓ Are there other ways to treat my condition?
- ✓ How often do you perform this surgery?
- ✓ How might I feel after the surgery?
- ✓ What will I be able to do or not do after the surgery?

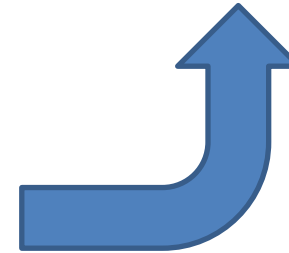


During Your Appointment

New diagnosis?



New test or medication?



Surgery or treatment?

After Your Appointment

Say: Your doctor may have you fill a prescription or make another appointment for tests, lab work, or a follow-up visit. It is important for you to follow your doctor's instructions. It also is important to call your doctor if you are unclear about any instructions or have more questions. Pharmacists can help answer questions about your medicines too.

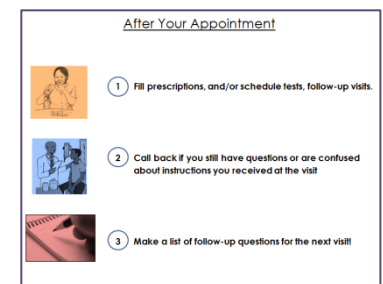
Prioritize your questions, create a list of follow-up questions to ask, and call your doctor if appropriate.

Call your doctor:

- If you experience any side effects or other problems with your medicines.
- If your symptoms get worse after seeing the doctor.
- If you receive any new prescriptions or start taking any over-the-counter medicines.
- To get results of any tests you've had. Don't assume that "no news is good news."
- To ask about test results you do not understand.

We will talk about the patient bill of rights later on, but you should know that you have a right to a copy of your medical records and/or test results. For example, if you have diabetes, you can ask for a copy of your lab results to find out what your most recent A1c was (remember the ABCs?).

Ask: Would you like to make a list of questions you'd like to ask your doctor at your next visit? I'd be happy to help you come up with a few [prompt participant to generate list. Even if they have no specific disease-related questions, suggest "how am I doing with my weight / blood pressure / A1c / cholesterol / asthma?]



After Your Appointment



- 1 Fill prescriptions, and/or schedule tests, follow-up visits.



- 2 Call back if you still have questions or are confused about instructions you received at the visit



- 3 Make a list of follow-up questions for the next visit!


Patient Bill of Rights

Say: Unfortunately, some people do not receive quality care from doctors and hospitals, and many do not know that they are entitled to certain rights and protections that are guaranteed by federal and state law. These rights are called the “Patient Bill of Rights,” and they were created to ensure that your rights are respected when receiving medical treatment. For instance, you have the right to:

[provide Supplemental Handout - “Patient Bill of Rights” and provide examples. Highlight #1 in regards to language access if participant is non-English speaking]

If you feel that you have received incompetent, negligent (dangerous), or fraudulent care from a doctor or physician assistant, you also have the right to file a report with the NYS Department of Health.

**KNOW
YOUR
RIGHTS!**



Patients' Bill of Rights

As a patient in a hospital in New York State, you have the right, consistent with law, to:

- (1) Understand and use these rights. If for any reason you do not understand or you need help, the hospital MUST provide assistance, including an interpreter.
- (2) Receive treatment without discrimination as to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, source of payment, or age.
- (3) Receive respectful and dignified care in a clean and safe environment free of unnecessary restraints.
- (4) Receive emergency care if you need it.
- (5) Be informed of the name and position of the doctor who will be in charge of your care in the hospital.
- (6) Know the names, positions and functions of any hospital staff involved in your care and inform their treatment, examinations or observations.
- (7) A no smoking room.
- (8) Receive complete information about your diagnosis, treatment and prognosis.
- (9) Receive all the information that you need to give informed consent for any proposed procedure or treatment. This information shall include the possible risks and benefits of the procedure or treatment.
- (10) Receive all the information you need to give informed consent for an order not to resuscitate. You also have the right to designate an individual to give this consent for you if you are too ill to do so. If you would like additional information, please ask for a copy of the pamphlet "Deciding About Health Care – A Guide for Patients and Families."
- (11) Refuse treatment and be told what effect this may have on your health.
- (12) Refuse to take part in research. In deciding whether or not to participate, you have the right to a full explanation.
- (13) Privacy while in the hospital and confidentiality of all information and records regarding your care.
- (14) Participate in all decisions about your treatment and discharge from the hospital. The hospital must provide you with a written discharge plan and written description of how you can appeal your discharge.
- (15) Receive your medical record without charge. Obtain a copy of your medical record for which the hospital can charge a reasonable fee. You cannot be denied a copy solely because you cannot afford to pay.
- (16) Receive an itemized bill and explanation of all charges.
- (17) Complain without fear of reprisals about the care and services you are receiving and to have the hospital respond to you and if you request it, a written response. If you are not satisfied with the hospital's response, you can complain to the New York State Health Department. The hospital must provide you with the State Health Department telephone number.
- (18) Authorize those family members and other adults who will be given priority to visit consistent with your ability to receive visitors.
- (19) Make known your wishes in regard to anatomical gifts. You may document your wishes in your health care proxy or on a donor card, available from the hospital.

Public Health Law §260.10 (1) (g) Patients' Rights, UNWCH, WCH and SUNY WCH

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- (2) Receive treatment without discrimination as to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, source of payment, or age.
- (3) Receive considerate and respectful care in a clean and safe environment free of unnecessary restraints.
- (4) Receive emergency care if you need it.
- (5) Be informed of the name and position of the doctor who will be in charge of your care in the hospital.
- (6) Know the names, positions and functions of any hospital staff involved in your care and refuse their treatment, examination or observation.
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Accessing Quality & Affordable Care

Say: I have given you some tips to help improve communication with your doctor during visits, and hopefully improve the quality of the care you are receiving. I know another issue that many people face is finding care that is affordable, because healthcare insurance and the costs of care are often expensive.

Ask: Have you experienced any problems with affording your healthcare, or understanding your financial responsibility when paying for your care?

[inquire about insurance status, affordability, and any issues with understanding claims. If necessary, provide instrumental support and/or refer to CSS Insurance Navigator]



Accessing Quality & Affordable Care



Session Review:

Say: Great! That's all the information I have for today. Just to review, we talked about the following topics today:

- ✓ Doctor-Patient Relationship
- ✓ Before Your Appointment
- ✓ During Your Appointment
- ✓ After Your Appointment
- ✓ Patient Bill of Rights
- ✓ Accessing Quality & Affordable Care

Say: Remind me, what are some of the things you can do to help prepare yourself before your next doctor's appointment?

Say: Do you have any other questions about the information we went over? Were there things you learned or didn't know before today? Were there things I didn't talk about that you'd like to discuss at a future visit?