

Partners in health



Building the bond with your doctor and pharmacist

Today it's more important than ever to take an active role in your health care. One way you can do this is by having a good relationship with your doctor and pharmacist. While these experts are well trained in their fields, there is one topic they need to know more about: you.

Before your next checkup or trip to the drug store, get ready. Plan to talk about your specific health issues with your doctor. Make a list of the drugs you are taking now. And be ready to ask questions about the care or medicines you get at your visit. When you, your doctor and your pharmacist work with each other, you'll get even better care.

Talk and see the payoffs

Cut out and carry this wallet-sized card to remind you to take control of your own health. Getting to know your doctor and pharmacist and asking the right questions can help you get the best results from your medicines.

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Questions to ask your pharmacist

When getting prescriptions or over-the-counter medications from the drug store, ask your pharmacist these questions:

- When and how should I take my medication?
- How long should I take it?
- Will other medications or alcohol interfere with this medicine?
- What are the side effects as well as signs of an allergic reaction?
- Will the medicine make me sleepy, and should I change my activities such as driving?



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Communication speaks volumes ...

When choosing a doctor, communication and trust are things to consider. You must be able to confide in your doctor and feel comfortable discussing all symptoms. In turn, your doctor should listen and give you options and feedback. Use these tips when you talk to your doctor to make sure you are on the same page:

Make it orderly

Your doctor's day is probably jam-packed, so make the most of the limited time you have during your office visits. Be organized. Get ready by writing down questions you want to ask ahead of time, and focus on your biggest concerns.

Track your records

Make a list and include: medicines and vitamins you are taking, signs of illness, tests, remedies, operations and anything else your doctor should know. The more you let your doctor know, the better the diagnosis and treatment you will receive.

Express yourself

Let your doctor know how much you want to take part in making decisions about your treatment. Also, discuss any cultural or religious beliefs that could have an impact on your care.

Speak up

Be sure to ask your doctor questions. If you don't get the answers you are looking for, try another source. Check out the Personal Health Manager's *Ask A Nurse* feature on Blue Access® for Members.

Give and take

While it's important to say what is on your mind, it's also important to offer a thank you or two if your doctor is open and gives you the help and care you expect.

Keep in touch

Communication is essential after leaving the doctor's office, too. Ask how to keep in touch between visits, whether it's through the office manager, nurse or e-mail.

Pay a visit to Provider Finder®

Before you visit the doctor, dentist or hospital, always check to make sure you are using an in-network provider. You can do this with Provider Finder. Here's how:

- Log in to Blue Access® for Members
- Click the *Doctors & Hospitals* tab
- Select *Find a Doctor or Hospital*

You can download a provider directory or get a map and directions to your provider's office.

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