

# YOU HAVE THE POWER:

## HOW TO BE YOUR OWN HEALTHCARE ADVOCATE

Talking to healthcare providers can be scary, but it doesn't have to be. You have the power to advocate for yourself. Remember, your visits are all about you and you know your body best!

### **Know why you are there**

Why are you going to the doctor? Is this an annual visit or are you having a specific issue? What makes you think this issue is abnormal? If you are having a specific issue, be sure to write down details of what is going on to take to your visit.



### **Know your medical history**

Know when your last period was, any medication/supplements you are taking, what your symptoms are and when they started, any major medical issues or surgeries you've had.

### **Ask questions & voice your concerns**

If you have specific questions about an issue, write them down and take them with you so you will remember them. Also if you have specific concerns about your visit, feel free to state them.



### **Be assertive**

If you feel the provider has not explained what will happen well enough, you can stop them to ask for clarification. You can also state if you feel uncomfortable or if you feel like you are not being heard.

### **Don't be afraid to get a second opinion**

Don't be afraid to get a second opinion. Because of their training and experience, providers can have different preferred treatment plans. If you need more information or are uncomfortable with the treatment plan the provider proposed, seek another provider's perspective.



*Print this handout and use it to write down your own notes before your appointment.*



***What doctor are you seeing? What is the reason for your appointment?***

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***What questions do you have for the doctor?***

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***What medications are you currently taking, including vitamins and supplements? Do you have any allergies or had recent surgeries?***

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