

## Tips to get the most out of your GP appointment

Most GP appointments are just 10 minutes long. That doesn't give you much time to explain your symptoms, get a diagnosis, discuss a treatment plan, and get your questions answered.

To try and get the most out of your appointment, go prepared. Plan ahead what you need to tell the doctor, don't try to talk about too many things, and always start with the most important issue.



## Things to consider – Top tips

### Before your appointment

- Write down your 2 or 3 most important questions.
- List or bring all your medicines and pills – including vitamins and supplements.
- Write down details of your symptoms, including when they started and what makes them better or worse.
- Ask your hospital or surgery for an interpreter or communication support if needed.
- Ask a friend or family member to come with you, if you like.



### During your appointment

- Do not be afraid to ask if you do not understand. For example: "Can you say that again? I still do not understand."
- If you do not understand any words, ask for them to be written down and explained
- Write things down, or ask a family member or friend to take notes.



### Before you leave your appointment

#### Check:

- You have covered everything on your list.
- You understand, for example: "Can I just check I understood what you said?"
- You know what should happen next – and when. Write it down.



## What to ask your doctor

### Tests, such as blood tests or scans

What are the tests for?  
How and when will I get the results?  
Who do I contact if I do not get the results?



### Treatment

Are there other ways to treat my condition?  
What do you recommend?  
Are there any side effects or risks? If so, what are they?  
How long will I need treatment for?  
How will I know if the treatment is working?  
How effective is this treatment?  
What will happen if I do not have any treatment?  
Is there anything I should stop or avoid doing?  
Is there anything I can do to help myself?



### What next

What happens next?  
Do I need to come back and see you? If so, when?  
Who do I contact if things get worse?  
Do you have any written information?  
Where can I go for more information?  
Is there a support group or any other source of help?



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