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Talking With Your Doctor or Health Care Provider

Clear Communication Videos

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Part I: Preparing for Your Medical Appointment (4:37)



Part II: Talking Openly with Your Medical Provider (3:51)



Part III: Understanding Diagnosis and Treatment (3:57)

More Resources from NIH

You can play an active role in your health care by talking with your doctor or health care provider. Clear and honest communication between you and your physician or

health care team can help you both make informed choices about your health. It's important to be honest and upfront about your symptoms even if you feel embarrassed or shy. Have an open dialogue with your doctor or health care provider— ask questions to make sure you understand your diagnosis, treatment, and recovery.

Here are a few tips that can help you talk to your doctor or health care provider and make the most of your appointment:

- Write down a list of questions and concerns before your appointment.
- Consider bringing a close friend or family member with you.
- Take notes about what the doctor or health care provider say or ask a friend or family member to take notes for you.
- Learn how to access your medical records, so you can keep track of test results, diagnoses, treatments plans, and medications and prepare for your next appointment.
- Ask for the doctor's or health care provider's contact information and their preferred method of communication.
- Remember that nurses and pharmacists are also good sources of information.

How to Talk with your Doctor

- [Talking With Your Doctor](#), *NIH News in Health*
- [Hablar con su médico](#), *NIH News in Health Español*

Aging

- [How to Prepare for a Doctor's Appointment](#), National Institute on Aging (NIA)
- [Talking With Your Doctor Presentation Toolkit](#), National Institute on Aging (NIA)

Cancer

- [Questions to Ask Your Doctor about Cancer](#), National Cancer Institute (NCI)
- [Preguntas para hacer al doctor acerca del cáncer](#) Español
- [Communication in Cancer Care](#), National Cancer Institute (NCI)
- [Comunicación en la atención del cáncer](#), National Cancer Institute (NCI) Español

Complementary and Integrative Health

- [4 Tips: Start Talking With Your Health Care Providers About Complementary Health Approaches](#), National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health (NCCIH)

Diabetes

- [Questions to Ask about Your Diabetes Medicines](#), National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases (NIDDK)

Mental Health

- [Taking Control of Your Mental Health: Tips for Talking With Your Health Care Provider](#), National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH)

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