

HEALTH REALLY MATTERS

The Most Important Member of the Healthcare Team (hint: It's YOU!)

Patient-centred care

- All health related decisions are respectful of your values, preferences and needs.
- Care is focused on your quality of life.
- The patient researches, asks questions and is involved in the discussion.
- This type of care means that patients are happier and healthier and less likely to fall through the cracks in the system!

Preparation is key, before a meeting with ANY healthcare provider

- Write down a list of questions and bring it with you.
- Think about and write down any recent changes or stressful events in your life.
- Jot down triggers that seem to make your symptoms worse.

- Have an updated list of your medications, medical conditions and allergies.
- If you think you will need extra time, ask in advance if this is possible.

To get the most out of your appointment

- Be open and honest about your health even if it is embarrassing or uncomfortable.
- Don't leave the BIG questions to the end of the visit.
- Take notes or bring someone with you to record what was said.
 - This is especially important if you feel unwell or are dealing with emotional or complicated issues.
- Ask for clarification until you understand.
 - You shouldn't be expected to understand complex medical words.
- Make sure you are clear about the next steps before you leave the meeting.
 - Who is responsible to do what? When will you hear back?



MEDICINE CENTRE
PHARMACY

- Get the facts

- If you are diagnosed with a medical condition, find out:
 - The name (get the proper spelling).
 - What causes it?
 - How long will it last?
 - Will it get worse or should it improve (and when)?
- If a new medicine is recommended, find out:
 - How and when should you take it.
 - If it is ok to take with your other medications.
 - What side effects might occur and what should you do.
 - What to do if you miss a dose.
 - When should you expect the medicine to work.
 - When should you stop taking the medication.
 - What is the cost? If the cost is an issue, find out if there are less expensive options.

Your Pharmacist can

- Review your medications regularly to check to make sure they are working the best for you and to look for any potential issues.
- Discuss benefits and possible side effects of the different medicines and work with you and your doctor to help you get the most out of them.
- Provide you with an updated medication list (this should also include vitamins, supplements or herbal medicines).
- Suggest ways to make it easier to take your medications regularly.

Find more great information and tools here

- My e-Health: <http://goo.gl/P8J7eV>
- Knowledge is the Best Medicine: <http://goo.gl/is46l6>
- PACE Guide Sheet: <http://goo.gl/w5gio0>
- Safe Medication Use: <http://goo.gl/YDRhVl>
- Patients Canada: <http://goo.gl/MoHE72>
- UpToDate—Benefits for patients: <http://goo.gl/dBSBOM>
- Medline Plus: <http://goo.gl/kN68hW>

Notes: