

Getting the Most out of your Time with the Doctor

The standard appointment time with the doctor is 15 minutes. This is a short time for you to explain your problems and for the doctor to examine you and to decide on a treatment plan. If you feel 15 minutes is not enough time to discuss all your concerns, you may be best to book a double appointment.

Handy Hints:

- Build a relationship with your doctor. Let your doctor know that you want to be a partner in your health care. Tell the doctor what your expectations are.
- Try to see a regular doctor – if your regular doctor does not work at times you want to see then or has limited availability, consider building a relationship with a new doctor.
- If you have a complex problem or you need a procedure done, be sure to inform the receptionist so they can advise you whether this requires a double appointment.
- Be realistic about what you expect to cover in 15 minutes – Your concerns are all important to us, so book sufficient time so that your doctor can give due consideration.
- Be on time. If you are more than 5 minutes late you will be asked to reschedule your appointment.
- Think about the main problem/goal you want dealt with at this appointment.
- Keep on target – Don't chat about stubbing your toe at high school if it is not relevant to your presenting problem
- Ask about your treatment – The risks and benefits, side effects etc., things you need to look out for.
- Make sure you understand what the doctor tells you. If you feel you need further clarification, feel free to ask the receptionist to ask the nurse to talk to you.
- Bring a support person with you if you feel this will help your understanding of your condition. He or she can take notes, ask questions to clarify information, and help you remember what your doctor says.