



Taking Action to Manage My Health

This checklist is meant to assist you and your family in managing your health and health care decisions.

Primary care provider

- I have a doctor identified as my primary care provider
- I don't have a primary care provider but I will identify one in the next 4 months
- My doctor communicates well and explains things in words I understand
- My doctor listens well
- My doctor encourages me to ask questions
- I feel like I can talk with my doctor and tell them most anything
- I feel like my doctor spends time with me during an office visit
- I feel like my doctor is sensitive to my needs
- My doctor refers me to other consultants if I feel they are needed
- My doctor explains medications to my satisfaction
- I feel confident in my doctor's knowledge and the care they provide
- I feel like my doctor includes me in my care decisions
- I would recommend my doctor to a friend or family member

Preparing for an office visit

- I bring my insurance card to all appointments
- I take time to list my concerns and questions prior to my doctor appointment
- I bring a list of all medications I am taking including over-the-counter drugs and supplements
- I describe my health concerns in detail keeping explanations short and to the point
- I bring a notepad to my appointment to take notes about key information

Exams and medical records

- I have a preventive exam schedule worked out with my doctor and check it annually
- I keep an updated copy of my health information at home that includes dates and descriptions of the following:
 - immunizations (see preventive exam handout (tetanus, Hep A, Hep B, mantoux, flu shots)
 - routine exam results (mammogram, pap, blood tests, etc)
 - surgeries
 - accidents
 - major events (heart attack, stroke, cancer, etc)
- I will make it an action to review my medical record in the next 6 months

Managing medications

- I carry an updated list of all medications, both prescription and over-the-counter, in my wallet including the drug name, strength and directions for taking
- I take medications as prescribed and don't stop taking them without checking with my doctor first
- I ask my doctor or pharmacist about potential side effects each time I receive a new drug
- I make sure I understand how and when my medication should be taken (with food, foods to avoid, how often, what to do if I miss a dose)
- I check with my pharmacist before I combine any medications (over-the-counter, prescription or supplements)
- I discuss all medications I am taking with my doctor at least once a year
- I ask my doctor or pharmacist if there is the option of a generic drug
- I know the most cost effective way to purchase my drugs (generic, mail order, local or clinic pharmacy)
- I consistently use the same pharmacies (walk-up or mail-in) to help manage my medications and prevent me from taking drugs that are not compatible
- I do not store medications in the bathroom where heat and humidity may alter their effectiveness
- At least once a year I go through my home medicine cabinet and properly dispose of all outdated prescriptions and over-the-counter medications.

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Resources:

- I have self-care resources, a book or credible web links, to use when I have questions about my health
- I have a nurse line available to me through my clinic or insurance plan and have the phone number easily accessible
- I use self-care resources and/or the nurseline to help make every-day health decisions (colds, sore throat, fever, rash, vomiting, etc) before I call my doctor
- I have an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) available to me through my employer or insurance plan and have the phone number accessible
- I know about the diverse services my Employee Assistance Program (EAP) has to offer my family and me
- I am confident that I can find and utilize credible resources and tools to manage my health (nurseslines, self-care books, Web sites)

Credible web sites:

Center for Disease Control and Prevention	www.cdc.gov
American Dietetic Association	www.eatright.org
American Medical Association	www.ama-assn.org
Food and Drug Administration	www.fda.gov
Healthfinder	www.healthfinder.gov
John Hopkins Health	www.intelihealth.com
Inteli-Health (definitions)	www.intelihealth.com
Lab Test Online (definitions)	www.labtestonline.org
Mayo Clinic Health Oasis	www.mayohealth.org
Medline Plus (definitions)	www.medlineplus.gov
Medscape Online	www.medscape.com
Minnesota Department of Health	www.health.state.mn.us
National Institutes of Health	www.nih.gov
National Library of Medicine	www.nlm.nih.gov
National Women's Health Information Center	www.4women.org
American Diabetes Association	www.diabetes.org
National Mental Health Association	www.nmha.org
National Osteoporosis Foundation	www.nof.org
Park Nicollet Health	www.parknicollet.com
Patient Powered	www.patientpowered.org

Reference book suggestions:

- Healthwise Handbook*. Healthwise Publication, Boise, ID. ISBN 1-877930-53-9
- Mayo HealthQuest Guide to Self-Care*. Mayo Clinic, Rochester, MN. ISBN 0-9627865-6-X
- Take Care of Yourself*. Addison-Wesley Publishing Co., Reading, MA. ISBN 0-201-63292-6
- Well Advised*. The Staywell Company, San Bruno, CA 94066. ISBN 1-56-66-626-0
- Well Advised for People Over 50*. The Staywell Company, San Bruno, CA. ISBN 1-56066-695-1