

# HELPFUL TIPS

## *Patients who ask questions and take an active role:*



**are happier with their care**



**make better decisions about their own health care**



**see more improvement with their health than those that don't**

## ***Preparing for your appointment:***

- **Ask someone to go to your appointment with you to help you understand and remember answers to your questions.**
- **Create a health history that includes your current conditions and past surgeries or illnesses and bring to your appointment.** Include your family's medical history and your current medication list. This may also include a completed National Task Group-Early Detection Screen for Dementia (NTG-EDSD). **\*Use the Health History form and NTG-EDSD form (both White)**
- **Bring questions regarding your appointment. Ask the important ones first.** Let the nurse and staff know that you have brought questions. **\*Bring Today's Visit form (Light Blue)**
- **Being able to understand the answers is important.** Take notes and/or have the person with you take notes. If you don't understand an answer tell the health care practitioner and ask him or her to re-explain.
- **When you are given the plan and/or next steps that your health care practitioner recommends, ask him or her to complete form.** Ask questions if you don't understand what the health care practitioner is suggesting. **\*Use the Summary of Visit form (Light Blue)**
- **Often clinics offer a summary of your visit.** Be sure to ask for a copy of the clinic's visit summary before leaving your appointment.

## ***You also may need to follow-up with your health care practitioner:***

- If you are experiencing any side effects from treatment, test, surgery and/or medication
- If your symptoms get worse
- To get results of the tests and/or questions about the test results.



Answers to these questions may help you make better decisions, receive better care, avoid medical harm, and overall, feel better about your health care which could also lead to better results for your health.





# SUGGESTED QUESTIONS

The health care practitioner may give you a diagnosis, recommend a treatment, give you a prescription for medication, suggest a medical test, or suggest surgery. Here are some suggested questions pertaining to those areas:

## RESULTS/DIAGNOSIS GIVEN:

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What is my diagnosis?

Will I need more tests?

How soon do I need to make a decision?

What is the future outlook of my condition?

What may have caused this?

What are my treatment options?

How much will the treatment cost?

What if I don't have the treatment?

Will I need additional special help for this?

## MEDICATION:

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What is the name of the medication?

Is there a generic version that I can take?

How much should I take?

Are there any side effects that I should be concerned about?

What if I forget to take it?

What else should I know about this medication?

What is it for?

When should I take it?

How long to I need to take the medication?

Do I need to avoid any food, drinks, or activities?

Are there side effects?

What if I take too much?

Will it be set up for a refill?

## MEDICAL TESTS:

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What is the test for?

How accurate is it?

Is this the only way to find out the information that is needed about my condition?

When will I get the results?

How will the results be explained to me?

How is it done?

What do I need to do to prepare for the test?

When will I get the results?

What would be the next steps after the results?

## SURGERY/HOSPITAL:

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Why do I need surgery?

What type of surgery is it?

Will I need any type of anesthesia?

Is this a day surgery or will I stay overnight?

What if I wait or don't have the surgery?

Is there another way to treat my condition?

Have you done this type of surgery before? How many?

What happens after surgery?

How long will it take me to recover?

When will I receive care instructions?