

# Make the most out of your doctor visits

## A guide for maximizing your time and making visits work for you

One of the most frustrating parts about going to medical appointments is how little time the patient gets to spend with their care team. Patients often leave feeling rushed and dissatisfied with the interaction. Our Team of Advisors have some suggestions for how to make the most of your limited time with your providers, how to prepare yourself for visits and why it's important to remember that you have the right to get care that works for YOU.



JUANA // LIVING WITH LUPUS  
WES // LIVING WITH ALS

*"I try to be as succinct as possible when I share with my physician because I know we have limited time."*

### Getting organized

Time is short and being prepared can help you get the most out of the time you have with your care team.



BRANDY // LIVING WITH RA

- Write out notes and questions ahead of time.
- Track your health between visits so you're not trying to remember how you've been doing on the spot. You can track symptoms, record treatment evaluations and complete your DailyMe on PatientsLikeMe to keep tabs on your progress.
- Look up any new treatments, trials or updates around your condition so you can go into your appointment ready to have an informed conversation.
- Think about what you'll need during your visit - a way to take notes or record your visit? A list of your medications? A snack or bottle of water while you wait? A book or new playlist to keep you occupied? Having these things ready in advance can make the visit go smoother.

"Know you have the right to come up with a treatment plan WITH your doctors. A treatment plan that you'll actually adhere to and feel good about is better than the best treatment plan you'll never follow."

## Advocate for yourself in the visit

Knowing what YOU want to get out of each visit will help you make sure you're getting what you need from your time with providers and will help you to make the most of your visit.

- Write out your main questions in order of priority and revisit them before your appointment.
- Do you have your own personal health goals? Bring these with you and share them so your provider knows what's most important to you.
- Be honest when discussing treatment options and what will or won't work for you.
- Bring a friend or loved one to your visit, sometimes they'll be able to shine a light on recent symptoms and issues. They can also take notes or help remember the discussion if you're feeling overwhelmed.



ASHLEY // LIVING WITH MAJOR DEPRESSIVE DISORDER

"We have to be our own advocates when we go in our doctor's office, we have to be the ones to look out for ourselves."

## Know your rights!

As a patient, you have important rights to receive quality care that works for you. Sometimes it can be hard to push back on providers but it can make a huge difference for your overall well being. Your relationship with your doctor will hopefully be a long-term relationship. It's your right to ensure it's founded on trust and mutual respect.

- You have the right to speak up if something doesn't feel right.
- You have the right to find the right doctor for you.
- You have a right to have a say in your healthcare.
- And if things aren't working, you have the right to move on and find a new provider who's a better fit.



JOE // LIVING WITH PARKINSON'S DISORDER