

HOW DO I prepare for my health visits?

Next time you see a healthcare provider, get the most out of your visit

According to the *Listening to Black Californians* study, **more than 9 in 10 Black Californians have seen a healthcare provider in the past year.** Regular check-ups are important! They can help find health problems and treat them before they're serious.



Health visits can be short, so use these steps to get the most out of them:

1. Prepare ahead of time:
 - Write down your questions and any symptoms.
 - Bring your insurance card.
 - Bring a list of all of your medicines.
 - Ask someone to go with you to help remember what the provider says.
2. During your visit:
 - Start with your most important questions in case you run out of time.
 - Write down or record your provider's answers, especially any actions you need to take.
 - Check that you understand by repeating information in your own words. You can say:
 - "I think what you are saying is... is that right?"
 - "I want to make sure I understand... did I get that right?"
3. After your visit:
 - Follow any health advice or instructions, such as filling a prescription at the pharmacy, getting tests or lab work, or scheduling a follow-up.
 - Call your provider if:
 - You have any side effects from medicines
 - Your symptoms get worse
 - You haven't gotten test results (Don't assume no news is good news!)
 - You don't understand your test results or how to take a medicine

Note: Health care providers can include primary care doctors, nurses, social workers, and more.

My questions

- What are my main health problems? _____
- Do I need to change my daily routine? _____
- What tests do I need? _____
 - How long will the test take? _____
 - How much does the test cost? _____
 - Why do I need to take this test? _____
 - When can I expect my test results and how do I get them? _____
 - What will we know after we get the test results? _____

- What procedures do I need? _____
 - How long will the procedure take? _____
 - How much does it cost? _____
 - What procedure is most common for my health condition? _____
 - What side effects should I expect? _____
 - What will happen if I don't get the procedure? _____
 - When do I need to have this procedure? _____
 - Can I still work if I get this procedure? _____
- What are my treatment options, and how will they help me? _____
- How should I take my medications? _____
 - How often should I take it? _____
 - How much (dose) do I take? _____
 - At what time of day should I take it? _____
 - Do I take it before, with, or between meals? _____
- Can you tell me more about my medications, such as:
 - Why am I taking this medication? _____
 - What's the name of the condition this medicine is treating? _____
 - Are there any side effects I should know about? _____
 - Is there a cheaper, generic form of the medicine? _____
 - Will the medicine conflict with other medicines I take? _____
 - How should I store the medicine? Does it need to be refrigerated? _____
- My other questions:
- Question 1 _____
- Question 2 _____
- Question 3 _____

Have questions or need help finding a provider?

If you need help finding a provider:

- Check out “How do I find the right health care provider for me?”
- Or ask your health plan for a list of covered providers in your area.

You can learn more about the *Listening to Black Californians* study at www.chcf.org/program/listening-to-black-californians

This resource was made possible by a grant from the California Health Care Foundation.

Published August 2023