
health hints



Getting More From Your Doctor Visits Ⓢ

(NAPSA)—1. **Take responsibility.** Your health care is a partnership between your doctor and you, in which you have responsibility for working with your doctor to manage the various aspects of the care you receive. This is not as daunting as it may seem. Credible, independent health information is now readily available at your fingertips through a physician-respected web site—MerckSource.com.

2. **Make it a priority to understand your health status and risk factors.** Studies show that doctors base up to 80 percent of their diagnoses on what patients tell them about their symptoms, history and lifestyle. MerckSource.com is a reliable source for patients interested in preparing for their doctor visits, or learning more about their health.

3. **Keep a health journal.** Once you start playing an active role in your own health management, it helps to be organized. Keeping a health journal can help you do that. MerckSource.com can help you gather information to

record in your journal, including family history, an immunization record, and preventative tests.

4. **Make time to prepare for office visits.** With preparation, your doctor visits can be more productive. Preparation may help you feel more confident and informed, and help you in articulating your symptoms or posing health questions. Use MerckSource.com to help you partner with your doctor.

5. **Ask the right questions.** Asking meaningful questions about your symptoms or risk factors may help your doctor diagnose a condition or provide information that can help you be more healthy. In preparation for your next doctor's visit, use MerckSource.com to generate a printable list of questions to help you articulate your reason for visiting the doctor. The site contains questions related to some of the most common reasons for visiting the doctor, such as allergies and smoking cessation. Showing this list to your doctor at the beginning of the office visit will help your doctor address what's important to you.