

## “Get the most out of your office visit”

I have seen many patients in the office setting, and I have also been a patient on occasion, so I know what that end is like, as well. Combining “both sides,” I would like to share some advice on how to get the most out of your appointment with your doctor. If you can consider these few points, it will make your visit more productive and (hopefully) less stressful for all involved.

1. If you are going to be late, or know you cannot make it – please call the office and let us know. We understand that things come up and will work with you to reschedule or could possibly work you in later in the day. But, we can use that slot that was reserved for you for someone else, or at least we will know not to wait for you and appreciate the consideration.
2. Arrive a few minutes early for your appointment. If you are a bit early, this will allow for any paperwork to be accomplished and get you in the room faster. If you are late, without calling, it can start a “domino effect” for the rest of the day.
3. Know your medicines by name, how much you take, and how often! When you visit with the nurse prior to seeing the doctor – he or she will want this information as they take your vital signs. If you have several medicines, keep a written list to share with us that is accurate. If any changes have been made recently, have this information as well. If you need some refills, this would be a good time to let it be known.
4. Keep your visit focused on the reason(s) you gave when you booked the appointment. The doctor only has a limited amount of time to spend with each patient, and he or she wants to maximize that time with you. But, this does not usually allow for a broad range of topics to be discussed. If you are there for a respiratory issue, for example, let’s focus on that. A quick question or two, or request for advice about something else is usually not too much to handle. But, if you bring out a list of 8 or 10 other issues...it is going to be hard to do justice to them given the limited time. If needed, ask about booking another appointment to address other issues. We want to do justice to all your concerns, but we need to make sure we have allotted time for them.
5. Lastly, before leaving, make sure you understand “the plan.” If prescriptions are being called or sent, make sure you know. Ask for copies of labs, if you would like to have them. Ask for a written summary, if needed.

The bottom line is we can both help each other to take the best care of you – and keep you healthy and well!