To: Senior News  
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RE: Planning Before Your Next Doctor's Visit  
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Planning Before Your Next Doctor's Visit

The single most important way you can stay healthy is to be an active member of your own health care team. One way to get high-quality health care is to find and use information, and take an active role in all the decisions made about your health care.

Research has shown that patients who have good relationships with their doctors tend to be more satisfied with their care, and have better results. Here are some tips to help you and your doctor become partners in improving your health care.

• Talking about your health means sharing information about how you feel. Sometimes it can be hard to remember everything that is bothering you during your doctor visit. Making a list of your symptoms before your visit will help you not forget to tell your doctor anything.

• Bring insurance cards, names and phone numbers of your other doctors, and the phone number of the pharmacy you use.

• Always bring any medicines you are taking, or a list of those medicines (include when and how often you take them), and what strength. Talk about any allergies or reactions you have to your medicines.

• Ask questions. If you don’t, your doctor may think you understand everything that was said.

• You might want to bring someone along to help you ask questions. This person can also help you understand and/or remember the answers.

• Ask for health brochures related to your health symptoms that you can take home and read in a more relaxed environment.

Remember quality matters, especially when it comes to your own health. As you get older, it becomes more important to talk often and comfortably with your doctor. For more information on health care quality and materials to help you make health care decisions, visit the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality at [www.ahrq.gov/path/beactive.htm](http://www.ahrq.gov/path/beactive.htm) or Central Michigan District Health Department’s website [www.cmdhd.org](http://www.cmdhd.org) (Click on Health Education – Services – Senior Wellness Program).

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