

Communication Skills for Better Health

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Whenever you receive important instructions from your doctor or a nurse, be sure to summarize their instructions in your own words. If it helps, ask your doctor or a family member to write the instructions down. Then you won't be confused and you'll remember what you are supposed to do.

Number one, be prepared for your visits, make a list of your questions and a list of your medicines including vitamins, herbs and any over the counter medicines. And don't forget to bring the list with you to every appointment.

Number two, speak up! Tell your doctor how you feel, ask questions, be sure to come back to your concerns if they haven't been addressed.

Number three, clarify what you hear. If you don't understand something, ask your doctor to use simpler words. Repeat what your doctor tells you to be sure that you understand. Review what you have heard at the end of each visit to ensure that you and your doctor are on the same page. And have your doctor write down any instructions.

Remember, communication is key to developing a strong partnership with your healthcare professionals.

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