

GENERAL GUIDANCE

With the information provided here, we want to help you to accomplish two main goals:

- 1) Make it as easy as possible for your doctor to determine your medical needs, and the most appropriate treatment plan.
- 2) Ensure that you receive timely access to medical care and the related services that you may need.

To accomplish this you need to communicate and prepare materials and questions:

☞ Ask for help. There's no need to go it alone.

During visits, ask questions of the secretary, nurse, or doctor about referring you to a care manager and other services. Contact and ask questions of local non-profit organizations as well.

☞ Prepare materials for visits to your doctor.

☞ Prepare questions of your doctor.

ASKING QUESTIONS

A good doctor-patient relationship requires honesty on your part, and diplomacy.

Ask: "Is this a good time to ask questions, doctor?" Or, provide the questions in writing – with space for answers – so your doctor can answer your questions when time allows.

Honesty: Let your doctor decide if a symptom or change is important or not. Communicate honestly with your doctor and the nursing staff.

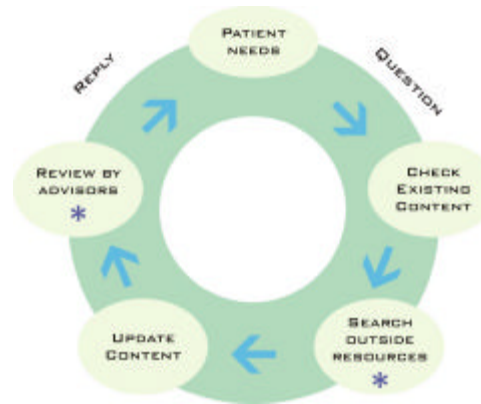
ABOUT US

Providing **evidence-based** resources for patients and professionals

~ Education ~ Support ~ Advocacy

Guided by our scientific advisors, the peer-reviewed literature, medical professionals fighting lymphoma, and **patient questions . . .**

we continuously improve our website in response to visitor questions and **patient needs**



Visit us at:

Lymphomation.org

[About Lymphoma](#) | [Advocacy & Art](#) | [CAM](#) | [Clinical trials](#)
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Patients Against Lymphoma is
a Not For Profit 501 (c) (3) organization

PREPARING FOR DOCTOR VISITS

A checklist to help you, or a loved one, to receive optimal care and medical services

Topics:

General Guidance

Asking Questions

A Checklist for Doctor Visits

Care Managers

Special Services

Patients Against Lymphoma



Helping to make progress against the disease

PREPARE FOR VISITS

Use this checklist to help you to prepare for visits to your doctor. Ask a trusted friend or family member to come with you, and to review this list. Select someone who has good listening skills and some medical or support background.

- ✍✍ A referral from your primary care doctor when seeing a specialist
- ✍✍ Authorization from your insurance company when special services, tests, or treatments will be administered
- ✍✍ Insurance cards
- ✍✍ Emergency contacts - bring a list of names, addresses, and telephone numbers
- ✍✍ Family doctor and local pharmacy contacts
- ✍✍ Pathology report and slides - Bringing the slides is especially important when consulting an outside expert for the first time
- ✍✍ A summary of your diagnosis, treatment history, and medical history
- ✍✍ A complete list of medications you are taking, including the dose and schedule
- ✍✍ A list of the dietary supplements and herbs you may be taking
- ✍✍ A list of dates, locations, and results of all doctor visits, tests
- ✍✍ A copy of your recent radiology report, and the film from the last image test if available
- ✍✍ A list of allergies and specific reactions to each
- ✍✍ A written list of questions for your doctor. Contact us to receive our brochure containing a checklist of questions for your doctor.

NOTE: The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) could now make it more difficult for doctors to get your medical records from other doctors' offices.

CARE MANAGERS

It's especially important to obtain help from a care manager if you have special needs.

Ask: *I'm feeling overwhelmed right now. Can you provide me with the names of care managers who can help me to organize what I need to know and do?*

Who are Care Managers?

Nurses specializing in cancer or other areas are "nurse navigators." They may be social workers; health care advocates; a family member or friend that you trust. Large facilities usually have a full-time care manager.


THE ROLE OF CARE MANAGERS

Care managers help you make sense of what the doctor tells you. Care managers can help you to:

- ✍✍ Organize your information and point you to resources
- ✍✍ Find out what types of treatments and tests your insurance company pays for
- ✍✍ Make sure your doctors have everything they need before they meet with you, including your medical files, test results, treatment history files
- ✍✍ Understand what your doctor has explained to you about your diagnosis and treatment plan
- ✍✍ Answer any questions you might have after you leave the doctor's office

SPECIAL SERVICES

Ask: *I'm in need of special assistance because of one or more of the following: anxiety, depression, confusion, fatigue, finances, pain ... Can you please provide me with contact information for special services to help me adjust to or to overcome this problem?*



Mental health professionals

(psychologists, or psychiatrists) - can help you adjust to the stress of living with cancer. Also see *Support for Anxiety and Depression* page on our website.

Pain specialists - can help you to improve your quality of life, and address problems related to your illness and treatment. Also see *Talking About Pain and Pain Support* on our website.

Physical therapists - can help you to address problems with mobility.

Nutrition experts - can help you to improve your quality of life, optimize your health, and reduce some risks related to diet and treatment.

Social workers - can help you find the resources you need, and provide direct support.

Support groups - can help by providing encouragement, and helping you to find resources.

NOTE: Usually one visit with the doctor is not enough especially if you're upset. You need to fully understand and remember all the important and complicated information you'll hear about your illness and treatment.