



# Advocating for Your Health Care

Telling your providers what you need is essential.

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Share how you're feeling. Your primary care provider (PCP) and other members of your health care team can be vital players in helping you get and stay healthy in the long term. Building relationships with them is key to making that happen. As with any relationship, developing trust is essential. That will take time and patience, but if you don't share your feelings and concerns, the relationship probably won't work. Although it would be nice if your health care team members took the first step, you'll often have to take the initiative.

Don't be shy. Sharing how you're feeling can be scary. After all, what if you get a negative reaction? No one wants that. When it comes to your health, however, being shy will most likely not get you the best care. At best, you may get some relief for your concerns. At worst, the remedies you're offered won't get the job done, period. To ensure an optimal outcome, tell your PCP or other health care team members what's on your mind. Do you have questions about adherence to daily pills or concerns about long-acting injectables? Ask and share!

Be proactive. Asking questions and sharing concerns often don't come easy. Overcoming shyness at the doctor's office may require you to push outside your comfort zone. Writing down your questions and concerns before seeing your providers is one way to make things easier. Still not making progress in developing these relationships? Tell them you're frustrated and why. If they don't change accordingly, it's OK to walk away, but make sure you have new providers in place before you do so that you remain in continuous care.

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