

Make Each Doctor's Appointment Work for You

Transition Skills, Tips & Tools
Making Your Own Appointments



1. Before your appointment, write down your questions and concerns. If it's a long list, ask for a longer appointment.
2. Bring your list of health concerns to tell your doctor or nurse.
3. Begin making your own appointments:
 - Watch your parent make an appointment
 - Practice with your parent what you will say
 - Have a calendar ready and know what dates and times will work with your school schedule and other activities you are involved in
 - Talk to the staff to schedule your appointment
4. Keep track of your appointments (on a calendar, on your phone, in a notebook, appointment card in your wallet).
5. Try asking the following three questions at each appointment:
 - What is my main problem?
 - What do I need to do?
 - Why is it important for me to do this?
6. Help your health providers by knowing your own medical history and what your needs are.
7. If you see specialists, ask them to share reports with your primary care physician and other specialists.
8. Bring a list of your medicines.
9. Bring your insurance card.
10. Ask lots of questions. Make sure you understand what you need and why certain medication, therapy, or equipment is necessary.
11. Have parent(s) remain in the waiting room while you spend time with your healthcare provider on your own.

(Next page provides tips for making your own appointments)

How to Make an Appointment

- Be prepared. Get help and practice before doing this by yourself.
- Have your calendar ready to be sure you make the appointment where it fits best with your school schedule or work schedule.
- When you call, be sure to ask to be put in touch with Dr. _____ appointment desk.
(fill in your doctor's or nurse practitioner's name)
- Know your date of birth.
- Know the name of your insurance provider.
- Know the reason you need the appointment.
- If you need assistance to get onto the exam table or need an interpreter, be sure to mention it when you call.

Sample Script:

"Hello, my name is _____"
(Use your first and last name)

"I need an appointment to see _____"

"Because _____"
(Example: "I need a checkup, I'm having headaches, I'm having ear pain.")

"How soon can I get in? _____"
(Write date and time here)

If the date and time is okay, say, "Thank you, that will be fine." If not, say, "That won't work for me, can you look for something else?"

"How long is the appointment? _____"
If you think you will need more time, say, "I think I will need more time."

If you will need extra help or equipment, be sure to say so:

"I will need _____"
(Example: a lift to get onto the exam table)

Before you end the phone call, repeat the date and time of your appointment:

"Okay, I will be there on _____ at _____"
(Date) (Time)

Follow-up steps: _____

**Put the appointment on the calendar so you won't forget it.
Prepare questions for your doctor. Bring a list of your medications.**

We're here to help.

To learn more about the Division of Specialized Care for Children's programs and services, check out our website at: dsc.uic.edu

