

My Concerns

(For example, driving after my procedure or going back to work.)

My Questions

(For example, what will my recovery be like?)

My Support Group

(For example, bringing my mother, spouse, or friend with me.)

Questions?

Your questions are important. Call your doctor or health care provider if you have questions or concerns. Clinic staff are also available to help.

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Shared Decision-Making

A guide to partnering with your health care team

Being an active partner with your health care team:

- Helps you make the best decisions about your health care treatment
- Results in better health outcomes

This guide will help you be an active partner with your health care team. Being an active partner with your doctors, nurses, and other health care providers will help you choose the care plan that best fits your needs.

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During your *health care visits*, you will make important decisions about your *medical treatment*. It may take some time for you and the rest of your health care team to agree on a treatment plan. At **(Your Practice)**, we are committed to helping you find the treatment that best fits your needs.

To reach the best decision for your health, talk with your health care team about:

- What treatments are available?
- What your concerns are.
- How your health care team can help you make your decision.

Before your first clinic visit, think about your health care questions and concerns. Write them down in the spaces provided on the back of this guide, and bring them with you to the clinic.

Share Your Decision Process

You and a member of your health care team will become partners to make a decision about the care you receive. The decision-making process will consider *evidence* (facts about different treatments) and your own values and preferences. This process is called *shared decision-making*.

There may be more than one treatment option for you to consider, including surgery or non-surgical treatment. Each option has different benefits and risks.

The best option for you takes into account your own health conditions, preferences, concerns, and goals, as well as your health care provider's medical knowledge.

Share Your Information

Sharing your questions, your experiences, and other information about yourself will help you and your provider make the best treatment choices for you.

You and your health care provider are both experts. Your provider is an expert on different medical conditions and treatments. Your provider can explain the benefits and risks of different treatments and how well they provide the health outcomes that you want. You are the expert on what matters to you and why you may or may not consider certain treatments.

Let your health care team know about your concerns. These may include being:

- Tired of living with pain.
- Concerned about the cost of surgery.
- Unsure about your recovery.
- Afraid you will not be able to keep up with your work or other activities.

Your health care team will match your treatment to your needs. They want to learn more about you to help you decide what is best for your health.

During or after your visit, your health care provider may provide you with a *decision aid*. A decision aid will give you medical information about different treatments and how

these fit with your preferences and concerns. Using a decision aid can help you decide among several options. It can also suggest the next steps you should take in the shared decision process.

Share Your Questions

Your health care provider wants to know your questions and concerns. It may be helpful to write these down before your visit. Ask as many questions as you need to fully understand the information that is discussed at your visit.

Share Your Experience

Making important decisions about your health is not easy. If you think it will help, bring people who support you such as your family and friends to your clinic visit.

Things to Remember

- **Be a team player:** Be an active member of your health care team.
- **Be your own expert:** Share your personal information and concerns.
- **Speak up:** Ask your health care provider to explain anything you do not understand.
- **Bring your support:** Share your concerns with families, friends or others who can support your decision making. Bring them with you to your clinic visit if you think they will help you make better decisions.