

# Before Your Visit...

Is this a Preventive visit or an Office Visit? Know your expectations because there are different billing schedules that may apply. It is possible that changing the conversation with your provider can alter the type of visit, causing the billing to be entered as a diagnostic visit rather than a preventive visit. Be careful – it can be unnerving to receive a surprise billing!

## PREVENTIVE

A visit to review overall health, identify risks, and find out how to stay healthy. Preventive visits are 100% covered by your health insurance, according to the Affordable Care Act

## OFFICE

A visit to to discuss or get treatment for a specific health concern or condition. Office visits may involve a copayment and/or coinsurance.



# KNOW B4 You Go

TO YOUR MEDICAL APPOINTMENT



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Being prepared for your visit with your provider will help save time, reduce anxiety, and ensure that your expectations are met. Remember – **KNOW B4 You Go** to your medical appointment to get the most from your visit.

## Set Your Goals

While you wait for your appointment date to come, take some time to consider: Is this a preventive or general office visit? What do you want to get out of this visit?



## Make A List

You may have waited weeks or months for this appointment, so it's understandable that you want to get everything in. But in the reality of today's medical world, you're only going to get a modest amount of time with the doctor. Quality is much more important than quantity when it comes to addressing medical concerns. Pick out the two or three most important issues and focus on those. Keep in mind that your doctor may have a few issues on his or her mind to discuss with you, so allot time for that.



## Gather Your Supplies

If you are seeing your general doctor, go online to verify your recent labs and results from any other diagnostic tests are there for review. If your doctor had asked you to do certain tests in advance, make sure you do them with enough time to allow the results to be available for your doctor.



## Internet Research

There's lots of good medical information on the web but also plenty of snake oil and infomercials, too. Avoid websites that sell products or offer any sort of freebies. Even with vetted medical websites, it's easy to fall into the rabbit hole of over-diagnosis. Close your laptop, take a deep breath and get a good night's sleep.



**Tip:** Bring something to do while you are in the waiting room. There's almost always waiting involved at doctors' visits, so come prepared with your knitting, sudoku or your Latin verb tables. Doing something fun or productive can make the waiting less arduous. Find out if your doctor's waiting room offers free WIFI, so you can bring a laptop along.



## Tip:

If there's a new symptom that you need evaluated, keep a symptom diary ahead of your visit. This should include:

- What does the symptom feel like?
  - When does it occur?
  - How long does it last?
  - What makes it worse?
  - What makes it better?
- 
- If you've had any **recent tests at another medical facility that is not connected with your doctor, bring those results.** (But again, be judicious. Don't hand your doctor a six-inch stack of papers and expect her to read them in detail. Separate just the important ones and place them on top.)
  - If you want an **ally in the room with you**, make sure that person is able to come with you to the appointment.
  - **Assemble your meds (including vitamins and supplements).** It's best to bring the actual bottles, but if you can't, bring your most up-to-date medication list.
  - Make sure you have your **insurance card** with you.
  - Some practices will allow you to do the dreaded "**paperwork**" **in advance or online.** You can save yourself time on the day of the visit by doing this.