Doctor’s Visit Checklist

From Liesa Harte, M.D. | Healthy Aging

> Fill this in before your appointment and bring it with you. **Be honest. Be specific. And don’t be afraid to ask.**

1 My appointment

Date and time: _____

Doctor or clinic: _____

Who is coming with me (optional): _____

2 My main goal for this visit

Tick one or more, or write your own.

- [ ] Find out why something has changed (for example, tiredness, dizziness, pain)
- [ ] Get help managing pain or another ongoing problem
- [ ] Review my medications
- [ ] Get reassurance about something I’ve noticed

Other: _____

3 What has changed since my last visit?

Tick anything that applies. You’ll describe the most important ones on the next page.

- [ ] A new symptom
- [ ] A symptom that is getting worse
- [ ] A fall, or a near fall
- [ ] Everyday tasks are getting harder (stairs, cooking, shopping, bathing)
- [ ] A problem with a medication (side effects, cost, hard to remember)
- [ ] Changes in sleep, mood, appetite, or memory
- [ ] I saw another doctor, went to the emergency room, or had tests

My Top 3 Concerns

Doctor's Visit Checklist — continued

Put your most important concern first. Don't save it for the end!

> ***Example:*** *"I've been dizzy when I stand up. It started three weeks ago, it happens several times a week, and yesterday I nearly fell."*

Concern #1

What is it?

_____

_____

When did it start? _____ **How often?** _____

◯ Getting better ◯ Staying the same ◯ Getting worse

How it affects my daily life:

_____

_____

Concern #2

What is it?

_____

_____

When did it start? _____ **How often?** _____

◯ Getting better ◯ Staying the same ◯ Getting worse

How it affects my daily life:

_____

_____

Concern #3

What is it?

_____

_____

When did it start? _____ **How often?** _____

◯ Getting better ◯ Staying the same ◯ Getting worse

How it affects my daily life:

_____

_____

My Medication List

Doctor’s Visit Checklist — continued

Include everything: prescriptions, over-the-counter pain relievers, vitamins, supplements, herbal products, and sleep aids. Or simply bring the bottles in a bag.

Medicine name	Dose	How often	What it’s for	Any problems or missed doses?

! Tell your doctor if any of these are true

- [ ] I sometimes skip or forget a dose
- [ ] A medicine makes me feel unwell (for example, lightheaded, tired, upset stomach)
- [ ] I stopped or started something on my own
- [ ] A medicine is too expensive
- [ ] My schedule is confusing and hard to keep straight

Please don’t stop or change a prescribed medicine on your own. Talk to your doctor or pharmacist first. Your doctor doesn’t need a perfect report. Your doctor needs an accurate one.

In the Exam Room

Doctor’s Visit Checklist — continued

Seven phrases to swap, and the words to use instead.

Instead of…	Try saying…
“It’s just old age.”	“I’ve noticed a change in what I can do. Is this normal aging, or should we look into it?”
“I’m feeling fine.”	“Overall I’m doing well, but there are two things I’d like to talk about.”
“I take all my medications.”	“I take most of them, but I’ve been skipping this one because…”
“It’s probably nothing.”	“I’ve noticed something different. Can I describe it to you?”
“I understand everything.”	“Let me repeat it back to make sure I’ve got it right.”
“I don’t want to complain.”	“This is stopping me from doing things I enjoy.”
“Whatever you think is best.”	“Knowing what matters to me, which option would you recommend, and why?”

? Before I leave, I will ask

1. “What’s the most important thing I should do next?”
2. “What should I watch for, and when should I call?”
3. “When should we check on this again?”

Call emergency services right away for:

Chest pain, severe trouble breathing, or signs of a stroke: a drooping face, arm weakness, or slurred speech. Don’t wait for an appointment.

This checklist is for general education and is not a substitute for personal medical advice.

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