

Healthcare Provider (HCP) Appointment Checklist

When you have an appointment with your HCP (doctor or nurse practitioner), the best thing you can do for yourself is to prepare ahead of time to be your own advocate.

This checklist outlines how to prepare for your appointment and provides tips on how to successfully advocate for yourself when meeting with your HCP.

1. What to prepare in advance of your appointment:

- Prepare a summary of your symptoms and relevant medical history. This is especially useful if this is your first appointment and your condition spans many years and contains many medical events. Try to use a chronological approach with bullet points. Key points include:
 - when the problem started
 - major milestones and previous and current treatment trials (over-the-counter medication, physiotherapy, acupuncture, exercise, etc.)
 - specialists you have seen and test results
 - your current situation: symptoms, impact on work, sleep, and mood, etc.
- Consider using a headache diary to track your symptoms several weeks or months in advance of your appointment. This helps to identify any factors that may have a positive or negative impact on your migraine. See our resources for diaries:
<https://migrainecanada.org/diaries/>
- Ensure your list of medications (prescription, non-prescription and natural health supplements) is up to date and highlight any changes in dosing or new medications. Include any side effects you are experiencing.

TIP! Your pharmacy can provide you with a list of your medications.



- If applicable, list any allergies or sensitivities (especially to medications).
- List any issues and questions you want to ask.
- For any medical tests, call ahead and confirm if there is anything that you must do to prepare (e.g. fasting, avoiding caffeine, etc.), or if there are any special processes.
- Consider asking a family member or friend to join you as a companion. If you are bringing a companion, share your concerns and support needs, e.g., ask them to take notes at the appointment.

TIP! Share your list of issues/questions with your companion so they can help keep track of the answers and remind you of any questions you may have forgotten to ask.

- Ensure you have the correct address for your appointment. Plan how you will get there, considering traffic, parking and delays in unfamiliar areas.

TIP! Make sure you are open and honest. Tell your HCP everything that may be relevant about your condition.

2. After the appointment:

- Review any notes you have to ensure everything important was captured accurately.
- Ensure you have a clear to-do-list and complete any follow-up actions: tests, new medications/doses, communications with other providers.
- Schedule your next appointment.

IMPORTANT! If you have more than one HCP on your treatment team, ensure you have all the information written down from your last appointment including medications, dosing, and recent test results.