

Preparing for a General Medical Visit

To help doctors make accurate diagnoses and to allow them to give you the best possible advice, it helps to be able to provide a clear account of what you are experiencing. It may help you to consider some of these most common questions you may be asked at a visit regarding a general medical concern:

- Can you describe the quality or nature of the problem? (What kind of pain, dizziness, shortness of breath, etc)
- Where in your body do you feel it? Does it radiate or involve other body parts?
- When did your problem first start? Does it come and go, or has it been present from the start?
- Has it come on gradually or suddenly? Was there some apparent cause or trigger?
- How severe is the problem and how does it impact your ability to function?
- Is there any pattern to the problem's occurrence? Have you noticed any relationship to activities, meals, the time of day, etc?
- Are there any other symptoms associated with your primary concern?
- Is there anything that makes the problem worse or aggravates it?
- Is there anything that helps or alleviates the problem to some degree?
- Have you tried any remedies or therapies to date and what was the result?
- Has this problem ever happened before? What happened that time?
- Do you have any thoughts or worries as to what the problem might be from?

Remember, if you are asked a question that you cannot answer, "I'm not sure" is a perfectly acceptable reply.