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Make The Most of Your Doctor's Appointments

Does your doctor never seem to have the time to listen to all of your concerns? Do you remember the questions you meant to ask the doctor when you get home? Do you have trouble remembering all the things your doctor told you during your visit? Well, you are NOT alone. As patients live longer and more productive lives, the delivery of medical care has become more complicated for various reasons, but don't fret, there are some simple things you can do to make the most of your doctor's appointments.

- 1) Write down your questions on a piece of paper and bring it with you to discuss at your next appointment, even the ones you forgot to ask the last time. Prioritize your questions in case there is not enough time to discuss them all at your next visit.
- 2) Educate yourself ahead of time about your medical conditions for which you are seeing the doctor. You can find information on our website at www.DrShibuya.com or at www.arthritis.org If you have general medical questions, you can go to: www.ahrq.gov or www.webmd.com
- 3) Bring all of your medications in their official labeled bottles, including eye drops, inhalers, ointments, vitamins, supplements and herbs. Although not as informative, a list of your medications is better than nothing. You can find a medication list to fill in on our website.
- 4) If English is not your first language, or you prefer to communicate in your native language, please check with your insurance plan to see if they provide for interpreter services. If you have Alameda Alliance, you can call (510) 747 4567 to request that an interpreter come with you to your doctor's appointment. A non-family interpreter is preferable as they are more familiar with medical terminology and will respect your privacy.
- 5) If you have a chronic medical condition, keep a journal of your symptoms, problems and concerns. Bring your journal to your appointments so that you can share your concerns and personal health goals.
- 6) Don't be afraid to ask questions and bring a piece of paper and a writing utensil with you so that you can take notes at your appointment.