



## **OFFICE VISIT TIPS**

### **HOW TO GET THE MOST OUT OF YOUR DOCTOR'S APPOINTMENT**

Your visit with a doctor is an important meeting that can be most effective if you plan ahead. It's important that you give the doctor the information he or she needs and that you understand what your doctor is recommending. The following checklist will help you **and** your doctor get the most out of the visit. This information applies to NMCC but should be useful to consider before any doctor appointment.

#### **BEFORE YOU ARRIVE**

1. Find out the basics of the office:
  - Where is it? (Our map is enclosed).
  - What time should you arrive? (30 minutes before your first scheduled appointment and 15 minutes before future scheduled appointments).
  - Where can you park? (There is plenty of convenient parking at NMCC).
  - If your treatment is late in the evening, please park in a well lit area.
  - Do you need to bring your insurance card or referral? (Yes).
2. Assemble your records such as results and copies of x-rays, other imaging studies, lab tests, and take them with you to the appointment. If your original records are left with your physician and you would like them returned, please relay this information to the PCC (Patient Care Coordinator) that is scheduling your return appointment. Please notify the PCC of any special collection needs for upcoming lab tests, such as a port device that should be accessed for collection of blood samples
3. Bring your prescribed and over-the-counter medications in their original containers to the appointment. Please include herbal remedies and supplements. Make a written list of all medications, including the dosages of each. Please provide this list to your Medical Assistant to assure that we have a complete and accurate record of your current medications.
4. Make a written list of your medical history, such as prior treatments, surgeries or allergies --- even those not related to your current problem.
5. Make a list of your concerns about your condition.

Consider asking a friend or family member to accompany you. If you need a translator, ask another adult to come with you; do not rely on a child to translate.

## **AT THE DOCTOR'S OFFICE**

1. Be honest and complete in talking with your doctor. Share your point of view and don't hold back information about issues such as incontinence, memory loss, sex or other issues you might consider embarrassing.
2. Stick to the point. Keep the dialogue focused on your care to get the most out of your time with the doctor.
3. Take notes on what the doctor tells you and ask questions if you don't understand the meaning of a word or the instructions for taking medications.
4. Fill out the Review of Systems form, this will help your doctor understand what your concerns are today.
5. Ask what to expect from your treatment, what effect it will have on your daily activities and what you can do to prevent unpleasant side effects.
6. Ask for handouts or brochures that you and your family can review at home. Your doctor may refer you to our website or other internet web site for more information.
7. Talk to other members of the health care team, such as physician assistants and nurses.
8. We may have you fill out a family history form.

## **WHEN YOU CHECK OUT**

1. After you have seen the doctor, your Patient Care Coordinator (PCC) will schedule any follow-up appointments that have been ordered. Most diagnostic testing can be scheduled to be done at our facility, but some tests may need to be scheduled at outside facilities. Your PCC will attempt to schedule all of your appointments while you are in the office. Occasionally, they may need to call you later with an appointment time that could not be confirmed at the time of your visit.
2. If you wish to have tests performed at another location, you may certainly do so. The PCC will provide you with a list of options. We must now, by law, have you sign a form that helps you understand your options before every imaging appointment.

3. If you need to schedule chemotherapy or infusion, you might be directed to the Infusion Room Scheduler.
4. If you have any questions, make sure that you ask them at this time. On your first visit, you will be given an appointment with one of the Financial Counselors. They will be able to answer questions about your insurance coverage and payment for services related to your care.

## **WHEN YOU GET HOME**

1. Review the materials the doctor gave you. If you can't remember something, or if you don't understand your notes, call the office and speak to a member of your health care team.
2. Follow the doctor's instructions. Take the full course of medication and be sure you follow the prescribed diet. Remember, that you and your family are in integral part of your health care team.
3. Keep your doctor informed of any change in your condition as he/she requested. Please keep a list of any upcoming appointments at our clinic. Please call the office if any appointments need to be rescheduled to better accommodate your needs.

