

Start a lasting CONVERSATION

Appointment Prep Guide



Let's make the most out of your doctor visits.

The “doctor-patient disconnect” is real.

Even in the best doctor-patient relationships, there can sometimes be communication breakdowns that can have a significant impact on how well your condition is understood and the way that it's treated. Today more than ever, it can be hard for patients to connect with their doctors. To gain insight into the communication challenges these patients face, in-person interviews with 18 gastroenterologists and 40 patients with inflammatory bowel disease were conducted and videotaped. Here's what they revealed:

- The average visit lasted **less than 11 minutes**, and during them doctors did **twice the talking: 67%**.
- **93% of the symptom-related questions asked by doctors** focused on the “here and now” vs. since the last appointment—**flares were only discussed 3% of the time**.
- The most surprising fact was that **in only 1 out of 10 cases**, doctors discussed with patients how they deal with the symptoms of their condition.

And yet, some of the most important decisions that will be made in your life are made during these appointments.

Five ways to “connect” more.

1. Tell your story in 3 chapters:
 - The past—give a quick “snapshot” of what your condition has been like since your last appointment.
 - The present—describe what your symptoms are like currently.
 - The future—share specific treatment goals, like: “I don't want to use any more vacation days because I'm sick.”
2. Describe—don't minimize—your symptoms. Tell it like it is.
3. Talk about how you deal with your symptoms, not just how you feel physically.
4. Review your current treatment—how it's working, any side effects.
5. Remember, connecting goes both ways—take a pad to jot down notes during your visit.

Fill out the form on the next page and take 5 steps that will go a long way in getting you closer to your treatment goals.

APPOINTMENT PREP GUIDE

USE this to prep for your next visit. It will help your doctor, too.
Fill it out. Print it. Take it with you to your next doctor appointment.
Don't forget the 5 ways to connect more.

1. Tell your story in 3 chapters.

How your symptoms have been:

How they are now:

What your treatment goals are:

2. Accurately describe your symptoms:

3. Make sure you talk about how your condition affects your quality of life:

4. Give a thorough report on how your current therapy is going:

5. Take notes so you can review what your doctor said, later: