MANAGING YOUR PERSONAL HEALTH

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Managing Personal Health:

• Talking to your provider
• Understanding your diagnosis and plan of care
• Health management
• Self-care
• Natural methods for sleep and pain relief
TALKING WITH YOUR PROVIDER
WHAT IS A PROVIDER?

Traditionally, the provider was commonly known as a “doctor” or a “physician”. Today, many people still associate this term with such definitions; however, there are new roles that also embody who a “provider” is.

Some roles include:

- Medical doctor
- Chiropractor/Physical Therapist
- Physicians Assistant
- Dentist
- Nurse Practitioner
- Specialists (Gynecologists, Obstetrician, Dermatologist)
VISITING YOUR PROVIDER’S OFFICE

Sometimes talking to your providers can be intimidating and at times overwhelming.

You only have a small amount of time to ask questions, understand your diagnosis and your prescriptions.
WHEN EVERYTHING GOES WRONG AT THE DOCTOR’S OFFICE

TELEMEDICINE EDITION
DISCLAIMER:
THIS VIDEO IS FOR ENTERTAINMENT PURPOSES ONLY, AND IS IN NO WAY A REFLECTION OF A REASONABLE DOCTOR’S VISIT.
HOW DID IT GO?
Dr. Jane did not introduce herself.

Dr. Jane got Sarah’s name wrong.

Dr. Jane spoke in fast, overly-technical medical terms.

Dr. Jane did not check to see if Sarah understood one concept before moving on to the next concept.

Dr. Jane did not explain Sarah’s diagnosis.

Dr. Jane did not explain the reasoning for the prescribed drugs.

Dr. Jane did not get a thorough understanding of Sarah’s illness before making recommendations.
WHAT COULD SARAH HAVE DONE DIFFERENTLY?

- Sarah could have taken a deep breath!
- Sarah could have brought a notebook
- Sarah could have asked questions with confidence
- Sarah could have interrupted to protect her safety or confidentiality
WHAT COULD SARAH HAVE DONE DIFFERENTLY?

- Sarah could have answered honestly
- Sarah could have asked for what she really needed
- Sarah could have used the Teach Back Method
  1. Dr. Jane teaches Sarah a new concept
  2. Once Dr. Jane is done, Sarah “teaches back” the new concept to Dr. Jane to make sure her understanding is correct
  3. Dr. Jane either confirms Sarah’s understanding or starts the process again.
A NOTE ON DR. JANE...

We admit it: Dr. Jane may be the WORST doctor ever!

BUT it is also possible that Dr. Jane is:

- Sleep-deprived
- Behind schedule
- Distracted by personal issues
- Misreading Sarah’s body language - she may think Sarah understands everything!

These are NEVER excuses for negligent or harmful medical care.

This is just a reminder that medical professionals are human. They make mistakes.
WHEN EVERYTHING GOES WRONG AT THE DOCTOR’S OFFICE: ROUND 2

Enhanced Communication Edition
YOU ARE YOUR #1 ADVOCATE.

DO NOT EVER BE AFRAID TO SPEAK UP OR QUESTION A PROVIDER’S DECISION.
• Take notes! Make a list of items you would like addressed:
  ○ New symptoms
  ○ Vaccines
  ○ Treatment follow-up
  ○ Medications that you are currently taking
    ▪ Or take them with you
  ○ All the providers/specialists you are seeing
    ▪ Include the hospital/clinic name, address, and phone number

• Updates for you provider regarding events that happened since your last visit
  ○ Visits to the Emergency Room?
  ○ Changes in energy levels, appetite, sleep, weight, mood?

(National Institute on Aging, 2020)
OTHER WAYS TO PREPARE FOR YOUR APPOINTMENTS

● Health journal
  ○ Track symptoms regularly
  ■ Document symptoms
    ● When did it start? Where? How long?
    ● What did you do about it? Did it get better?
      ○ Write down your questions

● Call your Provider’s clinic and ask what you should expect during your visit:
  ○ Blood draw? Urine test?
  ○ Physical examination?
COMMUNICATING WITH YOUR PROVIDER
PT. 1 EQUAL PARTNERSHIP

Remember: You are your #1 advocate!

In terms of your health and wellbeing, you and your provider have an EQUAL partnership.

- Both parties have to be cooperative on all stages of your health

- What does an equal partnership entail?
  - You have rights as a patient!
  - Be honest with your providers,
  - Be accountable for your health,
  - Actively seek out care (routine or as-needed)

Patients’ Rights

- Rights to be treated with respect and dignity
- Rights to full disclosure of the treatment plan, to make informed decisions
- Rights to obtain copies of medical records
- Rights to have a second opinion, even if conflicting with the provider’s recommendation
- Rights to privacy and confidentiality
- Among others...

(American Medical Association, n.d.)
1. To courtesy, respect, dignity, and timely, responsive attention to his or her needs.

2. To receive information from their physicians and to have opportunity to discuss the benefits, risks, and costs of appropriate treatment alternatives, including the risks, benefits and costs of forgoing treatment. Patients should be able to expect that their physicians will provide guidance about what they consider the optimal course of action for the patient based on the physician’s objective professional judgment.

3. To ask questions about their health status or recommended treatment when they do not fully understand what has been described and to have their questions answered.

4. To make decisions about the care the physician recommends and to have those decisions respected. A patient who has decision-making capacity may accept or refuse any recommended medical intervention.

5. To have the physician and other staff respect the patient’s privacy and confidentiality.

6. To obtain copies or summaries of their medical records.

7. To obtain a second opinion.

8. To be advised of any conflicts of interest their physician may have in respect to their care.

9. To continuity of care. Patients should be able to expect that their physician will cooperate in coordinating medically indicated care with other health care professionals, and that the physician will not discontinue treating them when further treatment is medically indicated without giving them sufficient notice and reasonable assistance in making alternative arrangements for care.

(American Medical Association, n.d.)
COMMUNICATING WITH YOUR PROVIDER
PT. 2

- Prioritize your needs
  - Why you are visiting your doctor?
  - Were there changes in your body?
    - New symptoms? Weight, mood, appetite, sleep, energy level changes?
  - Treatment follow-up?
- Questions that you prepared
- Updates since your last visit
- If you are visiting a new provider, make sure to inform them of your medical history, allergies, previous doctors

(National Institute on Aging, 2020)
COMMUNICATING WITH YOUR PROVIDER
PT. 3

Here are some ways you can intervene when you do not understand your provider:

- “Excuse me, can you further explain my diagnosis? What caused it, why do I have it, and what can I do to help my body fight this illness?”
- “Why am I being prescribed this medication? What are the side effects I should expect while taking this medication?”
- “Can you please repeat what you just stated?”
- “Can you please slow down? I do not seem to quite understand and need time to process the information.”
- “What should I do, as my next step, in my plan of care?”
COMMUNICATING WITH YOUR PROVIDERS
PT. 4

Do not leave the doctor’s office, until you understand…

1. Ways to manage your symptoms and diagnosis
2. Your medications
   a. Side effects
   b. Instructions to take your medicine
3. The next steps you must take once you leave the doctor’s visits, such as:
   a. Visiting your pharmacy to pick up prescriptions
   b. Follow-up visits
   c. When to contact the Provider
      (i.e. complications, concerns, etc.)
UNDERSTANDING YOUR DIAGNOSIS & TREATMENTS
# WEBMD: NOT YOUR BEST FRIEND

A note on WebMD

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pros</th>
<th>Cons</th>
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| - Gives a better insight into possible reasons for symptoms  
- Easy to access | - Overwhelming results  
- Heavy usage of medical terms  
- Unnecessary fear instilled due to drastic and possibly exaggerated outcome  
- Not recommended for self-diagnosis |
FINDING CREDIBLE SOURCES

● DO NOT TAKE MEDICAL ADVICE FROM NON-MEDICAL SOURCES
  ○ Always back up medical advice with credible sources
  ○ Everybody responds differently to illness and treatments

● Some Examples of Credible Sources
  ○ Mayo Clinic (https://www.mayoclinic.org)
  ○ National Institutes of Health (https://www.nih.gov)
  ○ U.S. Food and Drug Administrations (https://www.fda.gov)
  ○ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (https://www.cdc.gov)
  ○ BEST SOURCE: Follow-up with your provider
UNDERSTANDING YOUR PRESCRIPTION

- Follow-up with your provider or pharmacist
  - New prescriptions
    - To test your understanding of your medication, ask yourself the following:
      - What is this medication for?
      - What foods/drinks should I avoid while taking this medication?
      - When do I need to take my medication?
      - How many hours are there between doses?
      - How long should I take this medication?
      - What are some side effects that I might feel from taking these medications?

- A note on side effects: they are not guarantees!
ADHERING TO YOUR MEDICATIONS

- It is important to take your medications **exactly** as instructed.
  - Example: antibiotics
    - Must be taken on schedule
    - Never share your medications with others
    - Do not stop taking your medications unless instructed
    - Do not save leftover medications

  (FDA, 2009)

- Alert your provider or pharmacist IMMEDIATELY if you:
  - **Have an allergic reaction**
  - Experience significant side effects
  - Make changes to your diet, lifestyle, or supplement regimen
  - **Wish to stop taking a prescribed medication**

  (FDA, 2016)
HEALTH MANAGEMENT - MEDICATION

Keep Track of Medications Through:

- Pill containers
- Medication calendar
HEALTH MANAGEMENT - FOOD

Food & Diet

● Food diary
● Mindful eating habits
● Label reading
  ○ Look for:
    ■ Fiber, vitamins, and minerals
    ■ Calories, saturated fats, sodium and added sugars
    ■ Trans fat

(Medline Plus, 2018)
HEALTH MANAGEMENT - EXERCISE

- Helps you control your weight
- Improve your mental health and mood
- Strengthen your bones and muscles
- Improve your sleep

(Medline Plus, n.d.)
WELLNESS VISITS

- Types of wellness visits
  - Annual health check ups
  - Dental examination
  - Vision examination
  - Women’s health exams
LEVELS OF CARE

- **Primary care**
  - Soon
  - Timely treatment of acute illnesses and injuries
  - General medicine v. Specialists

- **Urgent Care**
  - Quickly
  - Non-life-threatening time sensitive conditions

- **Emergency Care**
  - Now
  - Predominantly serious or life-threatening conditions

- **Nurse Line**
  - Advice
  - Do I need to go to the Emergency Department?
SELF-CARE
SELF-CARE...
WHAT IS IT REALLY?

Self-Care:
providing adequate attention to one’s own physical and psychological wellness.
(Doran, 2014)

Self-Care:
providing mindful, compassionate attention to one’s own physical and psychological wellness.
Mindfulness is the quality of being present and fully engaged with whatever we’re doing at the moment (Headspace, n.d.)

- Identify your feelings
- Assess what you truly need in this moment
COMPASSION

To be compassionate, one must:

- Acknowledge the suffering
- Feel the suffering
- Respond in an attempt to alleviate the suffering
- Refrain from harsh judgment

(Self-compassion, 2020)

“When a flower doesn’t bloom, you fix the environment in which it grows, not the flower.”

-Alexander Den Heijer
I am the hero of my own life.
MASLOW’S HIERARCHY OF NEEDS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self-actualization</td>
<td>desire to become the most that one can be</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Esteem</td>
<td>respect, self-esteem, status, recognition, strength, freedom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Love and belonging</td>
<td>friendship, intimacy, family, sense of connection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety needs</td>
<td>personal security, employment, resources, health, property</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physiological needs</td>
<td>air, water, food, shelter, sleep, clothing, reproduction</td>
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(Burton, 2020)
CLIMBING THE PYRAMID

1. Have I met all of my “deficit needs” today?
   a. Have I had enough healthy food?
   b. Am I hydrated?
   c. Did I get enough sleep?
   d. Have I exercised at all?

2. Which “being needs” can I work on today?
   a. Have I talked with a loved one today?
   b. Have I done anything to build my confidence today?
   c. Are there any skills I would like to develop?
   d. Are there some small steps I can take today to reach one of my long term goals?
SELF-CARE ACTIVITIES

- Drink water
- Talk a walk
- Sit in the sunlight
- Call a friend
- Journal
- Meditate
- Paint or draw
- Stretch
- Pray
- Take a nap
- Feel your feelings
- Have a good cry
- Paint your nails
- Read a book
- Play a game
- Have your favorite snack
- Cook a healthy meal
- Work on something related to a future goal
NATURAL METHODS TO IMPROVE SLEEP
WHY DO WE NEED TO SLEEP?

7-8 hours per day are recommended for 18-65 years old

Sleep helps to:
• restore energy
• allow the brain to process information
• maintain bodily functions

Lack of sleep can decrease your ability to:
• think clearly
• focus
• react
• control emotions

Lack of Sleep can also increase risk of:
• High Blood Pressure
• Diabetes
• Depression

(Holland, 2019)
NATURAL WAYS TO SLEEP BETTER

• Keep a consistent sleep schedule: sleep and wake up at same time everyday
• Use your bed only for sleeping
• Keep a dark environment (Sullivan, 2020)
• Avoid exercising 2 hours before bed
• Keep a COOL room temperature - 65-72 degrees are ideal
• Drink warm milk, chamomile tea, and tart cherry juice (Johns Hopkins, n.d.)
THINGS TO AVOID WHEN YOU WANT TO SLEEP

• Looking at your phone or electronic devices
  o Blue light from the monitors stimulate your brain from sleep (Holland, 2019)

• Caffeine
  o 3-4 cups (250ml) not mugs are healthy range
  o avoid close to bedtime (Cordell, n.d.)

• Sleeping with your pets (Holland, 2019)

• Smoking
  o nicotine can interrupt sleep cycle
  o increases work of breathing during sleep (Sullivan, 2020)

• Eating large meals before bed
SLEEP DIARY

- Keep a notebook next to your bed and write:
  - Time you went to bed
  - Time when you fell asleep
  - Number of times you work up during the night
  - How long it takes you to fall back asleep
  - Time you wake up
  - When and how long your naps are
  - Medications you used to sleep
  - How much caffeine or alcohol you drank

(Mayo Clinic, n.d.)
WHAT IS WRONG WITH THIS PICTURE?
ANSWERS
NATURAL REMEDIES FOR PAIN
NATURAL ALTERNATIVES TO MANAGE PAIN

• Everyone expresses and tolerates pain differently
• Journal about your pain:
  • When? Where? How?
• Exercise
  • Stretching/yoga
  • Walking
• Ice & heating pads
• Daily nutrients
  • Hydration! - plain water or coconut water
  • Potassium and magnesium (muscle cramp relief)
• **BIBO: Breathe In and Breathe Out**
• Meditation
NATURAL ALTERNATIVES TO MANAGE PAIN, CONTINUED

- Healthy distractions/visualization
  - Music
  - Watch TV
  - Take a walk
  - Talk session
- Journaling
- Hot baths
- Massage
THANK YOU!

ARE THERE ANY QUESTIONS?
REFERENCES


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