

# Better Health Care for Better Health



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## Words you should know

**Primary care doctor:** the person you see for most of your health care.

**Specialists:** Doctors who treat certain health conditions or specialize in specific parts of the body. Some examples:

- **Cardiologists** treat heart problems
- **Oncologists** treat cancer
- **Orthopedists** treat bone and muscle problems
- **Obstetricians/Gynecologists (OB/GYN)** treat women only, including delivering babies

### What is a PCP?

Primary  
Care  
Physician

=

PCP

=

Primary  
Care  
Provider

### What is a “provider”?

**NURSE PRACTITIONER**  
A registered nurse with special training for providing health care, including many tasks usually done by a physician

**PHYSICIAN**  
A doctor who went to medical school

**PROVIDER**  
A doctor, nurse practitioner or physician assistant who gives (“provides”) you medical care

**PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT**  
A licensed medical professional who practices medicine as part of a health care team with physicians and other providers

## 3 Kinds of Primary Care Doctors



### FAMILY MEDICINE

give care and treatment for all ages and some of them also deliver babies



### PEDIATRICIANS

give care and treatment only for children and teenagers



### INTERNAL MEDICINE

give care and treatment for adults

## Why It's Important to Have a Primary Care Physician (PCP)

1. They can take care of most of your health care needs and work with specialists.
2. They help keep track of all your different treatments and medicines.
3. They can help you stay healthy by making sure you get all the regular tests you need, such as blood pressure checks.
4. They can help you make decisions about your health because they know you and your family history.
5. You can talk to someone any time of the day or night.
6. You probably can get in to see the doctor sooner.
7. If you have ongoing health issues (like asthma), they can keep it from getting worse.

## When You Should Go to Your Doctor, Urgent Care, or ER



### Go to a Doctor's Office for:

Minor illnesses, such as:

- Cough
- Flu
- Ear ache
- Sore throat
- Migraine
- Fever
- Rash

Minor injuries such as:

- Sprains
- Back pain
- Minor cuts and burns
- Possible broken bones
- Minor eye injuries

Asthma - mild



### Go to the Hospital Emergency Room for:

- Chest pain
- Severe stomach pain
- Poisoning
- Severe burns
- Deep cuts or bleeding that won't stop
- Severe pain with pregnancy
- Sudden blurred vision
- Trouble breathing or shortness of breath
- Sudden dizziness, weakness or loss of balance
- Sudden, severe headache (not migraine)
- Seizures
- Face drooping, arm weakness, hard to talk
- Suicide attempt
- Drug overdose

Remember: You can call your doctor 24 hours a day. Someone will answer. When you can't see your doctor, you may be able to go to an Urgent Care Clinic.

## Differences Between Your Doctor's Office and the Hospital Emergency Room

	<b>Primary Care Doctor</b>	<b>Emergency Room</b>
<b>Wait Time</b>	You usually will have a short wait after you arrive.	If emergency, the doctor will see you quickly, but you may wait for several hours for other problems.
<b>Doctor</b>	You usually can see the same doctor each visit.	You will see the doctor who is working that day.
<b>Health Records</b>	Your doctor will be able to look at your health records.	The doctor often cannot see your health records.
<b>What doctor will check</b>	Your doctor will check other areas of your health, not just the main problem that made you come in.	The doctor will only check the main problem that made you come in.
<b>Support for follow up care</b>	Your doctor will help make a follow up plan like how to get your medicine or schedule another visit.	You will leave the ER with printed instructions to follow up with your primary care doctor or specialist.
<b>Cost</b>	You may have to pay a primary care co-pay, often \$5 to \$50.	You will have to pay a higher co-pay, often \$50 to \$150.

What would you tell a friend who always uses the ER when her kids get sick?

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_

## Quality Health Care



Getting quality care is like taking your car to a mechanic. The people working there may be friendly and listen to your car problems, but the most important thing is whether they fix your car.

A lot of health care does not meet quality standards. In fact, we know from a big study in 12 large American cities that only about half (55%) of patients get the care they needed!

### All health care is **NOT** the same

- Some people do not get the tests and treatments that work best for their condition. Instead they get tests or treatments that do not work as well.
- Some people cannot get the care they need or have to wait to get care. This could make a health problem worse.
- Sometimes hospital patients develop new illnesses when they are in the hospital.
- Sometimes providers make mistakes, and people get the wrong medicine or something bad happens in surgery.

#### Examples:

*When Jean went to the doctor for a bad cold, he tested her for strep throat, even though colds are not caused by strep. He gave her an antibiotic because she asked for one.*

*Mary had an infection. She couldn't get in to see the doctor for 3 days. She got so sick she had to go to the hospital.*

*Some hospitals' patients have infections or develop blood clots in their legs more often after surgery.*

*Some surgeons are not quite as careful as others during surgery and can cause more bleeding or infections.*

## How do you know if a doctor gives high quality care

### How do you know if your doctor gives good care?

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#### **Personal Attention**

- Treats you with respect
  - Explains things in a way you can understand
  - Asks your opinion
  - Asks if you have questions
- 

#### **Safe**

- Gets you only services you need
  - Avoids mistakes
  - Asks you how you will use medication
  - Asks how you will care for yourself after you leave
  - Gives you specific instructions
- 

#### **Timely**

- Helps you know what kind of care you need
  - Is available when you need care
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#### **Good Results**

- Provides the right care, based on medical science

## How do you know if a doctor gives high quality care

**If you need a new doctor, how do you know if he or she gives good care?**

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### **Personal Attention**

- Ask for introductory visit (and if insurance covers it)
- Ask family/friends about their doctors
- Look up comments on-line
- Be sure this isn't the only reason for choosing

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### **Safe**

- Ask doctors or nurses if they have suggestions
- See if the doctor is involved in lawsuits or news stories
- See if the doctor has a current medical license

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### **Timely**

- Call the office. Ask how long you usually will have to wait.
- Ask the office if you can see a doctor that same day if you are sick

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### **Good Results**

- Look up information on clinical results



## Quality

A doctor giving you **quality health care** is doing the **right** thing at the **right** time in the **right** way to get the **best possible results**.

### How is quality measured?

**Clinical quality measures:** Based on the latest scientific proof, doctors agree on how they should treat certain health problems. These standards are sometimes called clinical quality measures. They are recommended for all healthcare providers in Wisconsin and across the country to follow.

**Consumer ratings:** When you go to the doctor or hospital, you may be asked to fill out a survey asking you questions about your visit. Your answers are combined with answers from other patients who used that doctor or hospital. This information is available on some web sites.

Here's a good place to look:  
[www.MyHealthWI.org](http://www.MyHealthWI.org)



### Clinical Quality Measure Example

**Dr. Smith is treating you for asthma. If he follows clinical measures, here are some of the things he will do:**

- Give you a prescription for asthma medicine
- Ask to see you in the office at least once a year
- Ask to see you within 3 months of an asthma Emergency Room visit
- Send you to a specialist if the usual medicines are not working

## 5 ways you can work with your doctor on your health and health care:

1. Work together with your doctor or other members of your health care team to make decisions about your care.

-Ask questions

2. Prepare for every doctor visit.

3. Know these **three things** when you leave the doctor's office:

4. Do your homework: go on-line or go to the public library or to your local hospital's medical library.

Ask the librarian to help you.

5. Find and use information on quality care to make health care choices. Be sure the information comes from a good source.

### What you need to know

- a. What is my health problem?
- b. What do I need to do?
- c. Why is it important for me to do this?

### Donald's Story

After visiting the doctor, what should Donald know?

a. \_\_\_\_\_

b. \_\_\_\_\_

c. \_\_\_\_\_



## Preparing for Your Doctor Visit

How can you prepare for your doctor visit?

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_

## The Right Questions to Ask

1. What is the test for?
2. How many times have you done this procedure?
3. When will I get the results?
4. Why do I need this treatment?
5. Are there other ways to treat this?
6. What are the possible complications?
7. Which hospital is best for my needs?
8. How do you spell the name of that drug?
9. Are there any side effects?
10. Will this medicine interact with medicines that I'm already taking?

What's one thing you learned today that you didn't know before?

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## Thanks to the following publications providing information for this workshop:

- *AskMe3, Partnership for Clear Health Communication, 2007*
- *Be More Involved in Your Health Care: Tips for Patients, Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality*
- *Choose Better Guide, National Health Service, United Kingdom*
- *Doctor's Office, Urgent Care Clinic, or Emergency Room, Washington State Hospital Association*
- *From Coverage to Care: A Roadmap to Better Care and a Healthier You, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, 2014*
- *Guide to Health Care Quality: How to know it when you see it, Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, 2005*
- *Your Health Matters: What is Quality Health Care, The Health Collaborative*



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