

How to Prepare for a Medical Home Port Visit

Planning before you arrive can go a long way in making your doctor's visit more valuable. If you understand your diagnosis and treatment plan, you will tend to be more effective in managing your own health. Your appointment is YOUR time to ask any questions you have or ask for information to be repeated. The following tips are provided to ensure you fully understand how you can be ***your own best health advocate***.

Plan ahead

Before you arrive or even call to make that appointment, think about the purpose of your visit. Does it relate to recent symptoms that are unusual or to a health maintenance appointment (annual physical exam)? Do you require a medication refill that can be handled without an appointment? Remember that proper medication management is one of YOUR responsibilities and the MHP staff has up to 72 business hours to address administrative needs. Be prepared and bring your list of questions you would like to ask. The more you get from your visit, the less likely you are to need a repeat visit that could be prevented.

Are these new symptoms?

If you're experiencing new concerns, consider how you'll describe what you're experiencing. Be prepared to answer the following: how long you've had the symptoms? How severe is it? What other symptoms are you having, and what other parts of your body are affected? Make every attempt to keep it simple and to the point. Your Primary Care Manager has limited time but will spend as much time as needed with you. Be reminded that each patient has unique needs, so if your appointment is delayed, it may be due to your PCM focusing on the needs of other patients as you would expect him/her to focus on your needs.

Are you due for an annual exam?

When scheduling an appointment, keep in mind that the purpose of the visit is to focus on your health needs you have identified and preventive maintenance your MHP strives to provide. Along with other issues you'd like to discuss, your PCM will discuss any preventive health screenings that you may feel are unrelated to the reason for your appointment, but very important to your health. Depending on your age and gender, your PCM may want to talk about and order things such as a pap smear and pelvic exam, a PSA or prostate exam, a bone density test, cholesterol and diabetes screening, mammograms, dental and eye exams, colon cancer screening, etc. So if you are asked to provide laboratory samples to update your clinical profile it is only because at your MHP, we care about your health.

Changing Primary Care Managers

Your satisfaction is very important to us. If you are not satisfied with your PCM and desire a change, we can thoroughly understand your situation; however, we would like to remind you that you may not be able to change PCMs at the time your request is submitted based on current enrollment and panel sizes. Your satisfaction is our mission and we will make every attempt to meet your needs within our standards, policies and practices.

Support during your Visit

Lastly, it is extremely helpful to bring your support person(s) with you to your appointment. Valuable information is less likely to be forgotten or misunderstood. You may even want your friend or family member to take notes for you.