

A PATIENT GUIDE TO MAKING THE MOST OF:

YOUR HOSPITAL APPOINTMENT

- ✓ Approach your appointment feeling confident and well-prepared.
- ✓ Ask useful questions and prepare for any next steps.

Before the appointment, think about...

Getting there:

- Arrive a bit early. How will you travel? How long it will take?
- Research times and prices for car parks or public transport.
- Book assistance, like use of a wheelchair, an interpreter, or a chaperone.



Talking about health:



- List your symptoms, and any questions or concerns you would like to discuss.
- These may be about your health, tests, treatment options, or what comes next.

Describe your **symptoms** in simple, clear language:

- ? What do they feel like? How often do they happen?
- ? How do they affect your day-to-day life?
- ? Does anything make them better or worse?
- ? When did you first notice them?
- ? Is there anything you think might be causing them?

Try not to underplay or exaggerate how you feel.

On the day:

- First impressions matter: how you look, what you say, and how you say it are important.
- Wear loose, removable clothes and shoes in case you are examined.

Definitely do bring:

- The appointment letter.
- A list of your current medication(s) and dose.

Optionally, you can bring:

- A notepad and pen.
- A family member or friend to support you.



- It's normal to feel frustrated, but stay calm and polite. The staff are doing their best.

During the appointment, it might go something like this...

- First, you see a **nurse**, to measure your height, weight, and blood pressure.
- Next, you see a **consultant and/or another health professional**. They may want to **examine** you: taking blood pressure, heart rate, and so on. You can ask for their names and positions, so you know who you spoke to, if they are not on your letter.
- If you need blood tests or scans, you see **another nurse** or an **imaging technician**.
- There could be **students** observing. You can refuse if you are uncomfortable, and it won't affect your treatment.

Questions you could ask:

?

Please explain the basis for this diagnosis. How certain is it? Could my symptoms be caused by something else?

? ?

What does this mean for me now, and in the long term? What are my treatment options?

? ?

Who should I contact if my symptoms get worse? What if I have any follow-up questions?

?

After your appointment...

- Write down a summary of **what happened** and **anything important** you were told. If you forget something, ask whoever came with you, or a nurse if present.
- Pick up **prescriptions** and attend any **tests** or **follow-up appointments**.
- Keep notes of **your health** and updated **contact details** for your doctor.
- Be aware of your **patient rights**, like your right to get a second opinion.

The doctors may ask you for:

An explanation of your symptoms, GP visits or appointments you have already had, and any treatments you have tried.

Your detailed medical history, including:

- Previous diagnoses you have received.
- Medications you take, and the dosages.
- Any surgeries you have previously had.
- Your alcohol intake, smoking habits, and use of any recreational drugs.

What are the likely outcomes?

- Your doctor might organise more tests (bloodwork, scans, biopsies, or others).
- They may give you a treatment plan.
- They may discharge you to your GP for monitoring or refer you to a specialist.

