



Only 8 Minutes.

The average time you spend with your doctor is about **eight minutes**. Make every minute count with these **five easy steps**.

- 1 Establish an active partnership.**
Tell your doctor up front that you want to partner with him or her. **That doesn't mean diagnosing yourself using the Internet.** It means working together to ensure the best possible care. Become an active partner in the decision-making process.
- 2 Tell a 10-second story.**
Don't focus on symptoms like "my knee hurts." Instead, tell a brief story like "For the first time since my injury, my knee hurt so badly I couldn't walk from my bed to the bathroom."
- 3 Prepare your questions ahead of time.**
Have a list of questions ready and ask them during your appointment. Write them down and bring them with you; it's easy to forget them in the moment. What is my diagnosis? What can I expect during treatment? What can I do to get better?
- 4 Ask about your tests and their risks.**
Patients typically ask about the reasons for, and risks of, drugs and surgery, *but not medical tests*. Make sure you understand why you need a test, what your doctor is looking for, what risks may be involved and what alternatives may be available.
- 5 Know your diagnosis.**
Never leave your doctor's office without knowing your diagnosis, or at least several possible diagnoses. If your doctor can't initially confirm your diagnosis, ask what steps are required to do so.

Remember, you can control your care. You have choices.

If you aren't comfortable with your doctor, [talk to your medical plan](#) and find a new one. If you want another opinion, get one. [Chevron's Health Decision Support with Best Doctors](#) can provide an expert second opinion, answer questions about your diagnosis or treatment, or even help you find another doctor for your condition.

