



GRAVES' DISEASE & THYROID FOUNDATION

*Educate * Encourage * Empower*

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What to Ask Your Doctor? A Good Question

Your physician is qualified to provide sound medical advice and treatment. However, only you can make personal changes that will help reduce your chances of illness, allowing you to feel better. That's why it is important to become more involved in your medical care by asking questions. In addition to following your "doctor's orders" you may want to ask some of these questions:

- What is my problem?
- What does the diagnosis mean?
 - Is it a common problem?
- Can you tell me what the words mean? (Any words you don't understand)
 - How did you arrive at this diagnosis?
- Where can I get more information about this diagnosis?
- What do I need to do now?
- What should I do at home?
- Is there anything I shouldn't do?
- When should I check back with you?

If tests are ordered:

- What will be learned from these tests?
- Should I expect any discomfort from them?
- Do I need to make special arrangements (such as fasting; planning transportation home?)

If medication is prescribed (or any procedure):

- Is there any alternative to taking this medication or procedure?
- If so, is it effective?
- How does the medication help the problem?
- Does it have any side effects I should know about?
 - Is it available in generic form?
- If so, is that appropriate for me?

If your Primary Care Physician gives you a referral for specialty care:

- Who becomes my primary care physician?
- How will the specialist be able to treat my problem?

- How many times will I visit the specialist?
- When should I return to you for my medical care?
- How will the doctors communicate with each other with me?
- What can I expect in the next few weeks and also over the long term?
- Will the problem go away completely?
- Is it likely to come back?
- What is the best possible outcome?
- What is the worst?
- What are the risks if it's not treated?
- What things do I need to be aware of that might indicate that I should call you?