



AASPIRE

Healthcare Toolkit

Healthcare: Making Appointments

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Healthcare: Making Appointments

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1 What is this topic about?

This topic is about how to make an appointment with a healthcare provider. Different providers may have slightly different ways to make appointments. This section gives some basic information about appointments that should be similar for most providers.

2 What might I want to know before I schedule an appointment?

Before you or your supporter contacts the office, you might want to have the following information ready.

1. The contact information for the provider's office (telephone number, address, etc.)
2. The reason why you are making the appointment (for example, new patient visit, sore throat, annual exam, etc.).
3. Your (or your supporter's) contact information in case the office needs to call you back.
4. What days and times you are free.

5. Who to call for a reminder, and that person's phone number.
6. If you have health insurance, who your insurance provider is.
7. Any other questions that you may have about the appointment.

You might not need to know all of these things, depending on the particulars of the appointment.

The [Making an Appointment Worksheet](#) has places to organize all of this information.

3 What might I want to know after I schedule an appointment?

By the end of making the appointment, you may have learned some of the following things.

- The date and time of your appointment.
- Where your appointment is located.
- The name of the healthcare provider you will be seeing.
- Anything special you need to bring to the appointment, or do before the appointment (for example, not eat any food eight hours before).
- The answers to any other questions you had about the appointment.

You might not need to know all of these things, depending on the particulars of the appointment. The [Making an Appointment Worksheet](#) has places to organize all of this information

4 I can't use the telephone or have trouble with scheduling, what should I do?

Unfortunately, many providers or their offices do not feel comfortable using non-secured text-based ways to make appointments, such as email or text. Here are some ideas if you have difficulty with the telephone:

- Find out if your healthcare provider has an electronic messaging system (for example, MyChart) and use that system for scheduling.
- Ask someone you trust to make the appointment for you.
- Go to the office in person and make the appointment face-to-face.
- Use an online relay or caption service such as [AT&T Relay Service](#), which will allow you to type and/or read.
- Have someone contact the office, or go to the office in person, and make special arrangements.

If you have a hard time with scheduling things, here are some ideas that may help:

- Ask the healthcare provider's staff or front desk people to help you with scheduling.
- Ask someone you trust to help you with scheduling.
- Use calendar software on your computer or mobile device to keep track of appointments.
- Use the [Making an Appointment Worksheet](#) which organizes all of the steps for scheduling and gives a sample script you can use.

5 What might I say when making an appointment?

What you say when making the appointment will be a little different depending on the type of appointment you need. Here is a script for how to start the conversation in a few different situations. Each fill-in-the-blank script is followed by an example. When making the appointment, you would put your own information in the blanks, not read the example.

- Establish Care or New Patient visit

"Hi, my name is (your name) and I would like to make a new patient appointment with Doctor (the provider's last name) to establish care."

Example: Hello, my name is Jane Smith and I would like to make a new patient appointment with Doctor Connors to establish care.

- Follow-up visit

"Hi, my name is (your name) and Doctor (your provider's last name) wanted me to schedule a follow-up visit (time frame)."

Example: Hi, my name is Edward Smith and Doctor Jones wanted me to schedule a follow-up visit within the next four weeks.

- Other types of visits

"Hi, my name is (your name) and I am a patient of Doctor (your provider's last name). I am calling to schedule an appointment with my doctor because (describe the reason for the visit)."

Example: Hi, my name is Jane Smith and I am a patient of Doctor Connors. I am calling to schedule an appointment with my doctor because I went hiking last week and I came back with a rash and it's not getting better.

The conversation will be a little different each time after this point. The person you are talking to might ask you some questions, or you might want to give

information right away like saying when you are available. A script for other things to say is included with the [Making an Appointment Worksheet](#).

6 Summary

Before you make an appointment you may want to know:

- Your provider's contact information,
- The reason for the visit,
- Your contact information and the telephone number for the reminder call,
- When you are free to see the doctor,
- Your health insurance information.

After you make the appointment, you may want to know

- Date, time, and location of the appointment,
- Name of the healthcare provider you'll be seeing,
- Anything special you need to bring to or do for the appointment.

If you have trouble with the telephone some alternatives might be

- Use electronic messaging, if available,
- Have someone help you,
- Make the appointment in person,
- Use a relay service.

To start making an appointment, say *"Hello, my name is (your name) and I'm calling to make a (type of appointment) appointment with (provider's name). The reason I am making the appointment is (reason)."* A more detailed script can be found in the [Making an Appointment Worksheet](#).