

Working with your health care team is important! Your health care providers have medical knowledge, but you know yourself best. Along with the medical facts, your personal values, beliefs and experiences need to be considered in making health decisions.

Know the facts. ⁽¹⁾

- Talk to your doctor, nurse, pharmacist and other members of your health care team. Ask about side effects, pain, recovery time, cost, or long-term outcomes of each option.
- Read trustworthy websites. It is important to make sure the information you collect is based on credible and up-to-date medical research, not the results of a single study or a website of a company that wants you to buy their product. Look for the credentials of the author (e.g. doctor, nurse, psychologist) to make sure the information is written by a health professional.

Reflect on your needs, values and desired outcome. ⁽¹⁾

Think about what you value most in life. Talk with family members or close friends to help you get an idea of this. Consider what the best possible outcome of the decision is for you.

Make a list. ⁽¹⁾

Make a list of pros and cons for each option and share this list with you health care provider. They can make sure you have the correct information.

Talk with your healthcare provider. ⁽¹⁾

With your health care provider, choose the best option for you. After you made a decision, think positively about it. Find out what you can do next to make sure you will have the best possible outcome from your decision.

How to get the most out of your medical appointment ⁽²⁾

- Keep a list of all the medicines you take and bring it to the appointment.
- Tell your health care provider that you want to be a partner in your health care.
- If you do not understand, ask questions. You can take notes if needed.
- Tell your health care provider if you think your treatment plan will be hard for you to follow.
- Bring a family member or friend with you.
- Before leaving, make sure you know what your next steps are.
- Ask for handouts, videos, websites or other information.

Resources

(1) Health Link BC. (2017). Work closely with your doctor. Retrieved from <https://www.healthlinkbc.ca/health-topics/prtnr#aa93627>

(2) Health Link BC. (2017). Making the most of your appointment. Retrieved from <https://www.healthlinkbc.ca/health-topics/hw226888>