



Preparing for Your Doctor Visits

With brain injury often comes multiple doctors and numerous medical appointments. Below are tips to empower you to feel more comfortable when visiting your doctor.

1. When scheduling an appointment, tell your doctor you'll need extra time so that you will have enough time to process information without feeling rushed.
2. If you feel overwhelmed by noises and distractions, arrange with your doctor's office for a quiet place to wait, such as an empty exam room. If this is not possible, ask if someone can come and get you from the foyer or your car.
3. Get to your appointment at least 15 minutes early so you can collect your thoughts and get settled.
4. Have someone come with you to your appointments if possible.
5. Consider keeping a journal or daily log to note symptoms and changes that occur in between your appointments.
6. Write down everything you want to tell and ask your doctor. Organize your list of questions and prioritize those of higher importance in case you are short on time with your doctor. Cross each item off the list after you have discussed it. Write down instructions that your doctor gives you. Review each issue to make sure you understand.
7. Ask your doctor to write down your diagnosis and the preferred treatment/rehabilitation plan. Clarify with your doctor and insurance company the costs and coverage of the recommended treatment.
8. Trust your instincts. If you have concerns about your diagnosis or if you think your doctor is minimizing your problems, don't be afraid to seek a second opinion.
9. Always ask your doctor about contraindications (things that you shouldn't do/eat/take) when they prescribe new medications and make sure you understand them. Have the doctor provide you with a written list of all of your medications. Take charge of knowing everything about the medications you take.
10. Ask your doctor to make a note in your file stating that you should receive a copy of all reports, lab results, and other tests as soon as they are received by the office. Make sure to submit all requests for copies of your medical records in writing, signed and dated. Keep copies of all correspondence with your doctor.
11. If there is an online platform you can use to access your medical records, make sure you understand how to create an account and log in. Ask the doctor's office for instructions on how to access your records.

12. Make sure that all authorization forms are completely filled out before you sign and that you have read the entire form. Get a copy of every release form/letter you sign.
13. Don't hesitate to contact your doctor if questions arise following your appointment. Verify what the best contact method is to get in touch with your doctor for questions.

THE BRAIN INJURY ALLIANCE OF NEW JERSEY
825 Georges Road, North Brunswick, NJ 08902
Helpline: (800) 669-4323
Phone: (732) 745-0200
Fax: (732) 745-0211
Email: info@bianj.org
Website: www.bianj.org

Our mission is to support and advocate for individuals affected by brain injury and raise public awareness through education and prevention.