

Preparing for Your Mental Health Visit

Tips to prepare for your first visit with your mental health provider.

Why am I being referred to a mental health provider?

Your doctor has recommended you see a mental health provider to help you better deal with what you are feeling and going through that is affecting your day-to-day life.

Who are mental health providers?

Mental health providers are part of your healthcare team. They can be social workers, counselors, support group leaders, or psychiatrists.

What does a mental health provider do?

Mental health providers are there to help, listen, and offer support. They help you cope with what you are going through and better manage your symptoms. Mental health providers will ask questions about your family, your relationships, and even about your medical history. This information will help them develop the best plan to help you feel better.



How should I prepare for my mental health appointment?

1. Write down a list of your symptoms so you do not forget them. Take this list with you to talk about how these symptoms have changed your life.
2. Take a list of all the medicines you are taking, including any home remedies. You can also take the medicines with you if that is easier. It is important that your mental health provider knows everything you are taking, even vitamins and herbal teas.
3. Write down any questions you may have like:
 - How long will my treatment be?
 - How soon until I feel better?
 - Who will see or have access to my information?
 - Do I have to talk about things I do not want to?

Ask questions when in doubt. It is important for you to feel good about your experience.

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Remember:

- **It is okay to ask questions.** If you are confused about anything your mental health provider said, ask them to explain it again or write it down for you.
- **It is normal to feel nervous.** Talking to someone you do not know can be hard and make you feel uncomfortable. It may help to take someone with you for support, even if they just wait outside.
- **You decide what to share and feel comfortable talking about.** Information you talk about with your mental health provider is private and not shared with others without your permission.
- **You choose who you want to work with.** If you do not feel comfortable after your first visit, you can always ask to change mental health providers. Your appointment should be a positive experience.



The key to a healthy mind is YOU!