

Your Appointment Checklist

- Make sure you know why you're visiting a specialist.
- Check that your primary care doctor has requested a referral if you need one for insurance purposes. Make sure, too, that the specialist has received any necessary medical information from your doctor.
- Follow the guidelines in *Your Office Visit: How to Make the Most of Your Time*.
- Make sure you know which doctor to see for follow-up care and how your care will be coordinated between the specialist and your doctor.
- Ask for written instructions if you'd like them.
- Schedule appropriate follow-up tests, appointments, phone calls or e-mails with your doctor or the office staff before you leave.
- If you have questions, call your primary care doctor for guidance.

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Getting the most out of your visit with a specialist



Welcome! This office is part of **ProHealth Physicians**, Connecticut's leading group of primary care practitioners. Everyone here is committed to your good health.

Your primary care doctor has referred you to a doctor who specializes in health issues relating to a particular body part or system such as the bones or heart. Take a few minutes to read this pamphlet. The guidelines outlined here can boost the quality of your office visit. After all, *your health is our primary care....*



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Before Your Visit

- Know the specific reason for your referral—for instance, “I have angina—blocked arteries to the heart” or “My knee continues to hurt from arthritis.” Have your primary care doctor clarify and write down anything you’re not sure of.
- If you are referring yourself, are you sure this specialist is the right one for you? Your primary care doctor can help you choose the best specialist, someone you can work with to alleviate your problem in a timely manner.
- If your insurance company needs a referral, ask your primary care doctor’s office staff to arrange one. They’ll need to forward any appropriate information about you to the specialist, too. Are there X-rays or lab work that you need to bring with you? Work all this out before you leave your primary care provider’s office.
- As you do before any office visit, make a list of your questions and concerns for the specialist, along with a list of any medications you are taking—and how much. Include vitamins and supplements, too.
- Remember to bring your insurance card.

The Office Visit

- Plan to arrive early enough to fill out any registration forms and answer questions about your health history.
- The specialist will listen to your concerns, ask questions and follow up with a physical exam of the problem area.
- Discuss the diagnosis and treatment plan and ask questions! What are the risks and benefits of this treatment? Does this treatment plan need to be modified to fit any special needs you may have? Working with your specialist to let him/her know of your questions and concerns will result in a plan that’s tailored to your specific needs.
- Will there be any follow-up lab tests? If so, where? Check to make sure the specialist will provide a report to your primary care doctor.
- Will you follow up with the specialist or your primary care doctor? These two doctors will work together with you to coordinate your care in a way that promises the best outcome for you.
- If the specialist refers you to another specialist, check with your primary care doctor to make sure he/she is aware of the recommendation
- If you ever feel confused while seeing different specialists, call your primary care provider or get in touch through ProHealth’s web site at www.prohealthmd.com. Your doctor has your total health picture in mind and can help sort things out.

ProHealth

Check ProHealth’s web site at www.prohealthmd.com for more information about health issues and access to your practitioner via e-mail.