

Making the Most of Your Medical Appointment

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RANCHO LOS AMIGOS
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Objectives

- Increase satisfaction of both patients and providers
- Improve health outcomes from medical encounters
- Enhance ability of individuals to manage their own medical problems and encounters with providers
- Provide specific strategies and tools that can be easily used by patients and family members in most medical encounters

Contact with the Medical System is Common

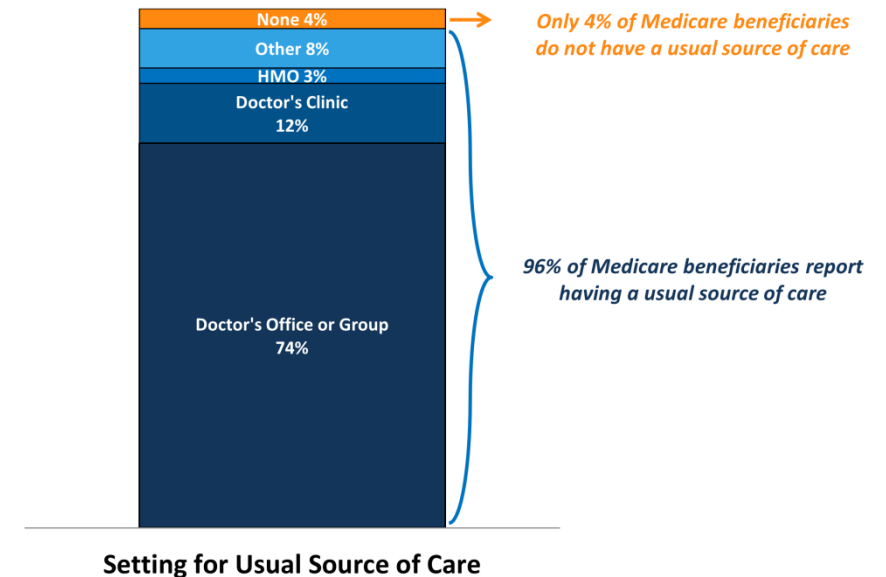
- Adults annual health professional contact: 83.6%
- Hospital admissions annually: 125.7 million
- Number of visits: 884.7 million
 - Number of visits per 100 persons: 282.0
- Percent of visits made to primary care physicians: 52.2%
- Most frequent principal illness-related reason for visit: medication
- Most commonly diagnosed condition: essential hypertension

Outpatient Medical Care Use By Older Adults

- Type of provider seen
 - Primary 45%
 - Specialty 55%
- Most common reason (diagnoses)
 - Hypertension
 - Cardiac arrhythmia
 - Diabetes mellitus

Exhibit 1

The majority of Medicare beneficiaries report having a usual source of care; typically a doctor's office or doctor's clinic



NOTES: "Other" setting of usual care includes: neighborhood or family health center, free standing surgery center, rural health clinic, company clinic, other clinic, walk-in urgent care center, at home, hospital emergency room, hospital outpatient, Veteran's Administration, mental health center. Beneficiaries residing in facilities (such as nursing homes) are excluded from this analysis. Values do not sum due to rounding.

SOURCE: Kaiser Family Foundation analysis of the 2011 Medicare Current Beneficiary Survey (MCBS) Access to Care File.

Time: A Scarce & Expensive Commodity

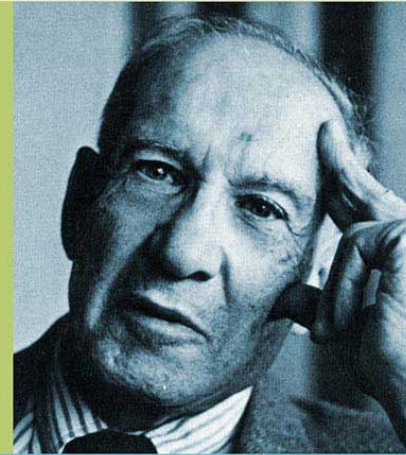
Impact:

- Quality of care
- Patient trust/confidence
- Malpractice
- Payment



“**Time** is the scarcest resource and unless it is **managed** nothing else can be managed.”

Peter Drucker



Patient Satisfaction

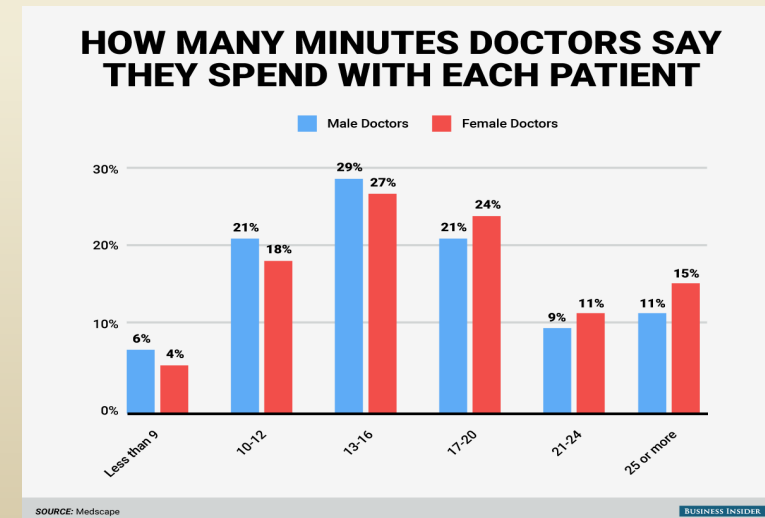
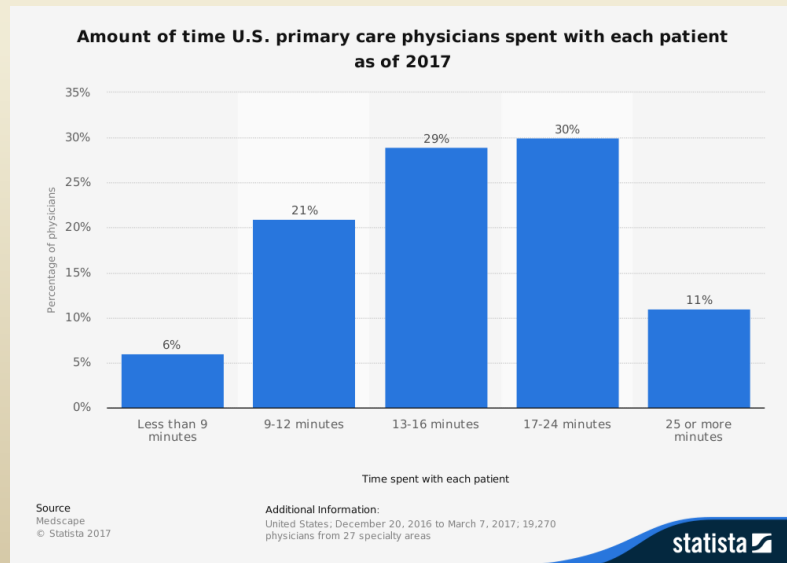
- Quality indicator (HEDIS)
- Positive predictors
- Negative predictors
 - Difficulty making an appointment
 - Kept on hold on the phone
 - Waiting room time >20 mins
- Mediators
 - Provider takes “time to listen”
 - Provider thoroughness



Star Rating	Average Wait Time
5	12 min, 56 sec
4	18 min, 19 sec
3	21 min, 40 sec
2	26 min, 11 sec
1	33 min, 1 sec

Physician/Patient Encounter Time

- Average visit time is 13-16 minutes
 - Consistent since 2011
- Female physicians spend more time with patients
- Shortest visits are in emergency room and critical care



Patient-Provider Partnership

- Patient expertise – you know you
 - Values
 - Beliefs
 - Lifestyle
- Provider expertise – education, training, experience
 - Medical care
 - Medical delivery system



Building Blocks of a Patient/Provider Relationship

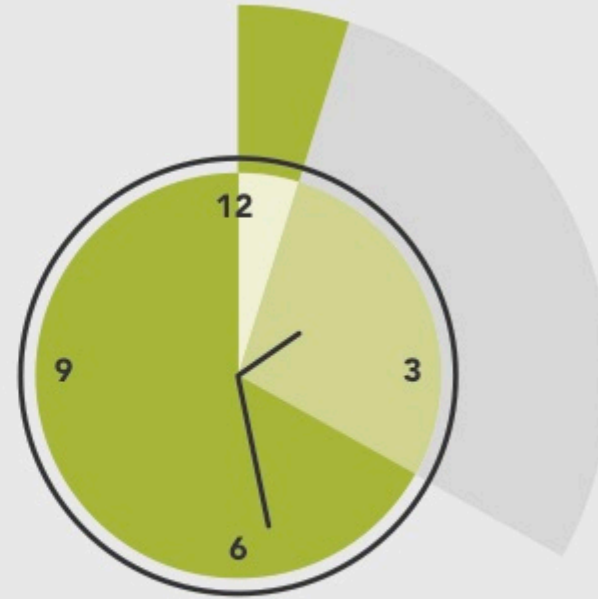
- Time
- Clear expectations
- Active participation
 - Ask questions
 - Come prepared
- Discharge instructions
 - Know what you are supposed to do to care for yourself (or loved one)
 - Resources; websites, videos, books, etc.
- Provider feedback



The Average Medical Appointment



18min with physician



3.5min of actual exam

Components of Medical Office Visit

PRE-VISIT	VISIT	POST-VISIT
Check-in Insurance Forms	Provider Talk & Exam Patient Paperwork	Testing Lab Xray, EKG
Wait time	Patient talking to provider	Referrals & Consultations
Vital Signs - Ht, Wt, BP, Pulse, Pain	Medications Adjust dosing Change (add/reduce)	Check out Return/Follow-up appointment
Chief complaint/Reason	Diagnosis	Billing & Payment

Punctuality

- Expect and prepare for delays
 - Traffic
 - Road work
 - Weather
 - Parking
- Plan to arrive 10-15 minutes early
- Don't arrive late and expect to be accommodated
 - Call if you are delayed



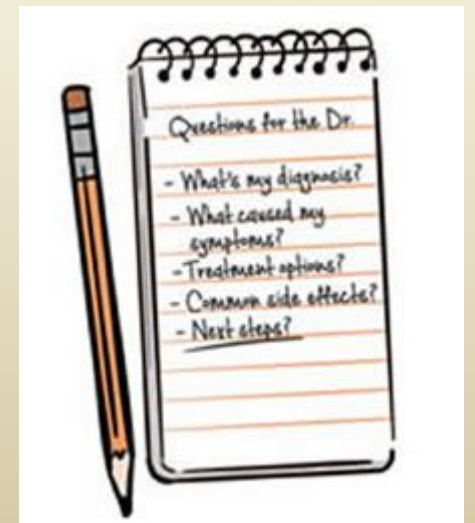
You've Got 15 Minutes (if you are lucky)

- Type of appointment
 - New provider/established provider
 - New problem
 - Second opinion
 - Routine care
- Reason for appointment (agenda)
 - List of questions
 - Top priority



Be prepared

- List of symptoms, specific instances or examples
- Bring all medications with you
- Create a list of all medical conditions, hospitalizations and surgeries with dates
- Get copies of medical records to bring with you (especially if a new provider)
- Have a family member or trusted friend go to the appointment with you



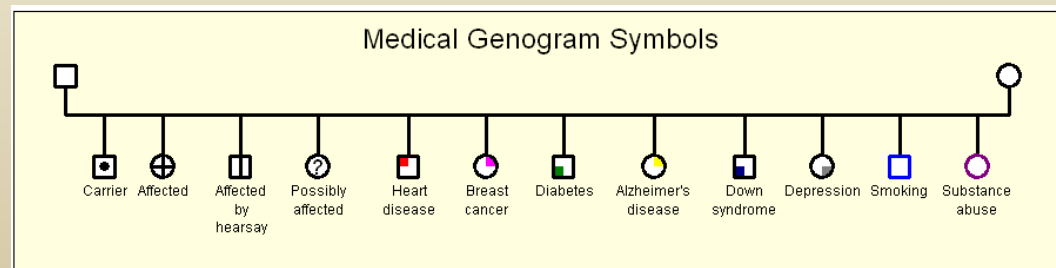
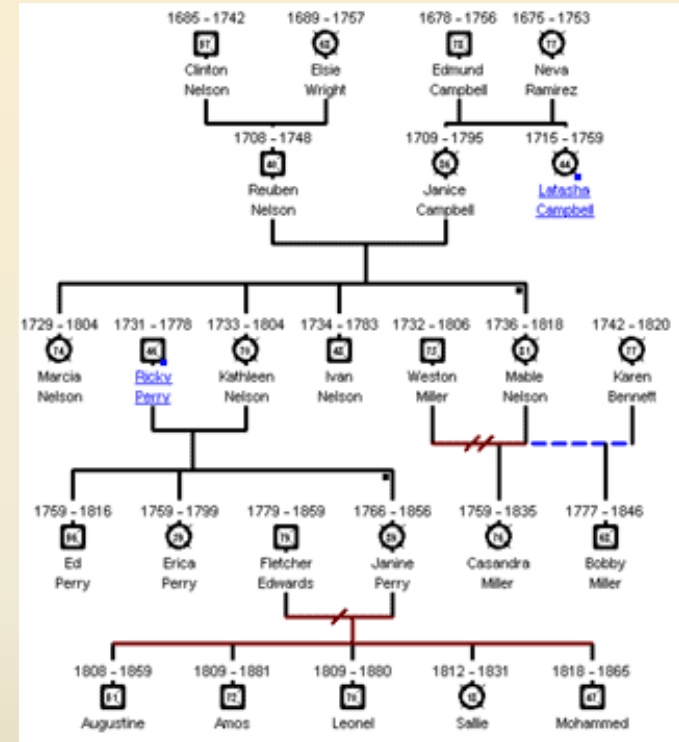
Know Your Medical History*

- Current medical conditions
- Hospitalizations
 - Name, date, location, reason
- Surgery
 - Operation, date, location
- Diagnostic tests
 - Test name, date
 - Most recent laboratory tests (results, date)
- Other current medical providers

* Bring a one page printed summary

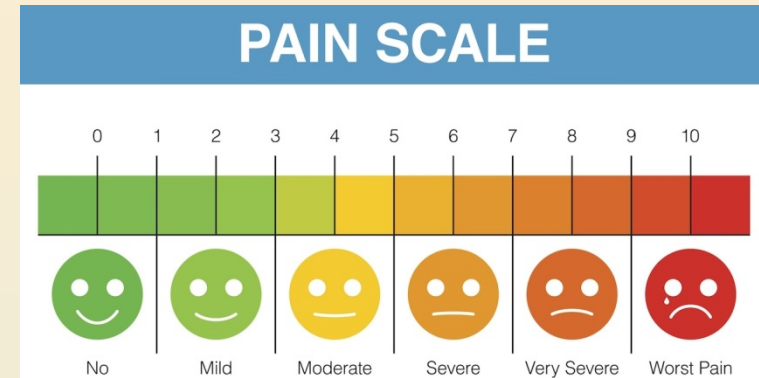
Family History

- Biology
 - plays a role in many medical conditions
- Genetics
 - Increased knowledge and application
- Family Tree – Medical Pedigree
- Risk – not destiny



Pain+ – A Subjective Experience

- Where?
- When?
 - Time of day
 - Activity
- What does it feel like?
 - Adjectives: sharp/dull, achey, crampy, stinging, tingling
- How much?
 - Pain scale (0-10)
- What have you tried?
- What makes it better/worse?



+ Referred to as the fifth vital sign

Sensitive Subjects

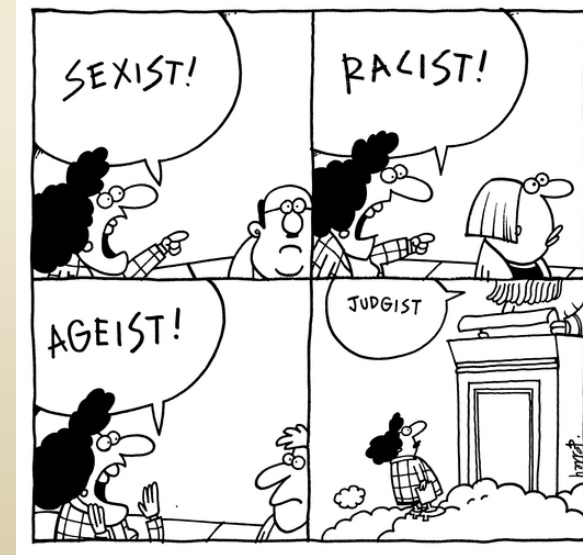
- Personal/Intimate topics
- Embarrassment is common & normal
- Providers are trained, some more comfortable than others
- Initiation by provider or patient
- Topics
 - Sexuality
 - Sexual performance
 - Memory loss
 - Bladder control/incontinence
 - Anxiety, depression
 - Falls/fear of falling
 - HIV-AIDs
 - Abuse/Partner violence
 - Alcohol or drug abuse



How to Raise Your Concerns to a Provider

- What to say:
 - We have noticed ...
 - You might not be aware, but I think you should know ...
 - I know you have limited time today, we would like to schedule another appointment to talk about ...
 - I think something is wrong ...
 - I hope you can help me...
- What you might hear in response:
 - Thank you ...
 - I wasn't aware/I had no idea....
 - Please talk to ...
 - Well, s/he's is xx years old, what do you expect?

Age is NOT a reason or acceptable explanation – it is Ageism



Be honest

- Minimizing complaints is not helpful
- Talking about personal matters can be uncomfortable or embarrassing
- Knowing what is 'normal' or an early sign of something more serious is not always easy
- Providers are not all knowing
- Don't say 'yes' when you mean 'no'
- Be explicit
 - Providers may not 'hear' or 'understand' what you say or mean
 - Describe changes, what's happening now compared to 3-5 yrs ago

Stop Fibbing - Common Patient Lies

- I take all my medications/I never miss any medication doses
- I never eat junk food
- I test my blood sugar every day
- I rarely drink/I only have one drink
- I stopped smoking years ago
- I wear sunscreen every day
- I exercise, every, day
- Drugs? No, never
- My hearing is fine
- I always practice safe sex (use a condom)
- I lost my pain meds

Getting the Right Treatment

- Expected outcome/goal of the treatment
- Length of treatment
- Expected (and unexpected) side effects
- Interactions with medications
- Potential complications
- Alternative treatment options
 - No treatment
- Risk vs benefit
 - Individual assessment

Barriers

Patients & Families

- Stigma
- Embarrassment
- Fear
- Anxiety

Providers

- Time
- Payment
- Lack of screening guidelines
- Lack of/Inadequate training
- Lack of effective medications



What to Expect

- Your concerns should be taken seriously
- More questions
 - Patient
 - Informant
- Physical Examination
 - Mental status (memory) screening test
 - Undressed, shoes & socks off
- Testing
 - Laboratory, radiologic, etc.
- Referrals
 - Specialist
 - Second opinion

Speak Up Initiative (Joint Commission)

- **S**peak up if you have questions or concerns
Pay attention to the care you get
Educate yourself about your illness
Ask a trusted family member or friend to be your advocate (advisor or supporter)
Know what medicines you take and why you take them
- **U**se a health care organization that has been carefully checked out
Participate in all decisions about your treatment

BE A PREPARED PATIENT

- Keep a medical record file/folder
- Access the patient portal
 - Test results
 - Direct communication
- Write down concerns & questions
- Take notes

Doctor visit checklist

Bring these with you:

- Insurance card.
- A list of health goals and concerns to discuss with your primary care provider.
- A place for taking notes during the visit.
- Your family medical history.
- Packages or bottles of medication you are taking.
- Your calendar, in case you need to schedule other doctor appointments or tests.
- Optional: your health supporter, a person you trust to go with you to the doctor.

Resources

- A Guide for Older People; Talking With Your Doctor (NIH/NIA)
 - www.nia.nih.gov
 - 800-222-2225
- Preparing for a Doctor's Visit: A Reference Guide for Patients, Caregivers and Advocates (American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA))
 - http://myphr.com/Resources/MX10172%20Patient%20Resource%20Guide_FINAL.pdf

