

Patty's PT Tips

Communication with Your Health Care Team

March 2, 2022

I. Who is on "the Team"?.....#1 is YOU

Keep an updated list of:

- Health Insurance Providers/Identification numbers
- Hospitals/Clinics/MRI centers/Lab services-file copies for yourself in a central location
- MD's/Specialist's, PA's, FNP's: Neurologists, Family Practice, Orthopedists, Urologists, Dentists, Internists, Ophthalmologists, Surgeons, Pharmacists/Medication services
- Medical Equipment providers
- Mental Health Professionals
- Physical, Occupational, Speech Therapists; Podiatrists, Orthotists/Pedorthist, Optometrists
- Chiropractors, Nutritionists/Dieticians, Acupuncturists
- Legal consultants
- Exercise Consultants-Gym consultants, Pool therapists, Tai Chi/Chi Gung instructors, Yoga instructors, Massage therapists, On line exercise programs, Feldenkrais practitioners, Art/music/hippotherapists (horse back riding)
- Clergy/Spiritual Directors/Church/Synagogue
- Home Care Providers/Home Health Agencies
- Housekeepers/meal providers, Grocery delivery services
- County Public Health providers/ Referral service providers
- Housing consultants/Repairmen
- Research Centers

Include dates of service. Maybe how you would rate your experience. What they treated you for. i.e. the neurologist may not be who treated you for your urinary tract infection

Family/Friends who are your support system-their contact numbers may help your care providers if it is easy to find information

- II. Copies of medical cards front and back. May want to use the App My Colorado Copy of Drivers License, State issued ID cards, Passport, Green card
- III. Create some centralized source for your own copies of medical visit notes, MRI's, Lab results. This may save you a lot of time in the future trying to hunt these records down. MRI's may not live in the practitioners files forever and so if you have your own hard copy or digital copy on your own computer it can get to your next consultant much more efficiently. I have a 3 ring binder for this type of information and keep it with our "Go Box" in case of fire/evacuation or making a household move.

Create your own "Progress report to the Doctor". (See attached) This is one format I use and it has made my appointments more productive because your essential communication is at your fingertips. Do this ahead of time when you can think about it and review it prior to your appointment. Make 2 copies-one for you and one for the doctor. Keep notes on your copy of the answers you receive from the practitioner.

It can be helpful to create an abbreviated version to take with you on trips or if you have to be hospitalized. It keeps loved one from having to search everywhere for the information.

The Medical Autobiography:

When you have some time write a medical biography that goes back to childhood. It may help for research, family genetic "connect the dots", or just being aware of when you had immunizations or child hood diseases. Internist love this stuff. You may have had surgeries or hospitalizations long before you had MS. It also helps when you need to fill out one of those very long health histories when seeing a new provider. It may give clues about when you may have experienced mild MS symptoms when you were younger. You may need to inquire from other family members what they have noticed or experienced in the recent and distant past. Ask trusted, compassionate friends and family how they think you're doing and ponder their feedback. Others may see changes that we don't.

Name: _____ DOB: _____ Report to: (MD name) Date: _____

Diagnosis: You may want to include other diagnoses that you are being treated for by other physicians/practitioners.

Chief Complaints: What is it that you want to spend the most time discussing at this appointment? What has changed since your last appointment-even if it doesn't seem the least bit related. It may stimulate additional questions from the physician or fit into a bigger picture. It may trigger a referral to an appropriate care provider. Include pain locations.

Medication Changes: From any physician for any condition. Don't forget supplements/CBD/recreational drugs/alcohol. If you think about this ahead of time you may realize you've changed something since your last visit and you will have the dosage/frequency/time frame written down. Take your list with you every time.

Lifestyle Changes-see below:

Exercise/Activity regime

Mood/Psychological changes

Recreation/Volunteer activities

Nutrition/Diet: Weight gain/loss if significant or style of eating

Meditation/ Relaxation Activities

Educational questions as they relate to your self-care. What do you want to learn at this visit?

Home environment-structural challenges, mobility equipment challenges

Research options you might be eligible for

Questions that you really want answered in this session-Print these in bold

Personal Goals: Short Term (less than 3 months) and Long Term i.e. Vacation in 6 months

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If you hand the Practitioner this list at the beginning of the appointment you can glide through you questions and concerns more efficiently. They will also have something to refer to when they are dictating their note and will be less likely to forget something important. Keep your own notes while you are there or have a care giver take notes on your copy. It reduces the stress of trying to remember everything. It also gives the practitioner a sense of what you are doing for your own self-care.