



## Tips for effective communication with your doctor

**Whether you have a routine check-up, a scheduled examination, or an acute consultation, it is good to prepare carefully for your visit with the doctor. Preparation will help you enter the office calmer, the conversation will be more effective and beneficial for both parties, and you will be a partner to your doctor in the dialogue about your health. So, what are the key things you should think about in advance?**

- **Write down the topics that are important for you to talk about.** Visiting a health care facility can be a stressful event. Summarizing your thoughts out loud in front of the doctor could mean your speech is likely to be lengthy or rushed, chaotic, and you may not have time to say everything you want to say.
- **Have a list of medications ready.** If you are taking multiple medications, and some for only a short period of time, it may not be easy to remember their exact names. Include also over-the-counter medicines you take from time to time to the list. This way, the doctor will be able to check, among other things, whether these medicines interact with the prescribed treatment.
- **Do not be afraid to ask.** Don't rely on your mind to recall all the questions about your illness and its treatment in the doctor's office. To make sure you don't forget anything important, write them down on paper, in your diary or on your mobile phone.
- **The wording of your questions matters.** When preparing questions, always try to imagine how much you can learn by asking them. You can take inspiration from the following wording: I forgot to take my medicine, what is the best way to avoid this next time? Could we please run through again how my medication works in my body? What other treatment options can be considered if the current therapy is not effective enough?
- **The information is best remembered if you try to repeat it out loud in your own words.** Some doctors will prompt you to summarize important points. If not you can always recap the key information aloud at the end of your doctor's visit.
- **Take somebody with you.** If you feel that you will need the support of a loved one during your visit to the doctor, ask them to go with you. Doctors understand and support this need.