

## **Dr. Trifoglio's Tips on Being Your Own Best Medical Advocate**

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Compile and bring with you to medical appointments a list of all your:

- Allergies to Medications and Foods
- Current Medications: Prescription and Over the Counter
- Nutritional Supplements: Vitamins, Minerals, and Herbs
- Medical Illnesses
- History of all Major Surgeries
- Family History of Medical Illness
- Social History
  - Smoking/alcohol/drug use
  - Occupational history (including spouse's)
  - Marital status/sexual partners

Organize your medical concerns and questions:

- Symptoms, duration, location of pain or discomfort
- Factors that make things better or worse
- Any treatment previously tried and whether or not it helped
- WRITE DOWN questions for each visit
- ALWAYS ask the most serious question first

Understand your treatment plan

- Changes to medications
- Follow up needed, including:
  - Other physicians to be consulted
  - Physical, Occupational, or Speech Therapy
  - Wound Care and/or suture removal
- Monitoring needed
  - Blood Pressure/Pulse
  - Daily Weights
  - Pulse Oximetry (Oxygen level)
- When to Call or go to ER

*IF the issue is complex: bring an advocate with you – a family member, friend, or professional advocate*