

# Health Decisions

Protect your rights by  
planning ahead



# Healthcare Decisions

- Making choices about your healthcare
- Choosing doctors
- Choosing what medical treatment is best for you
- Deciding if you want treatment or not



# Advance Directive

- Instructions for the future
  - Who you trust to decide about healthcare if you can't, and/or
  - What kind of treatment is okay with you, & what kind of treatment is not okay with you.
- Go into effect only when you can't make your own decision
  - For example if you are hurt so bad you can't tell the doctor what you want

## Doctor's Appointments

---

When do you need to see your doctor?

# When you call to make appointment:

Tell them:

- Why you need to see the doctor.
- How soon you need to be seen.
- Any accommodations you need.

Ask them:

- What to bring?
- Any special instructions?



# Getting Ready

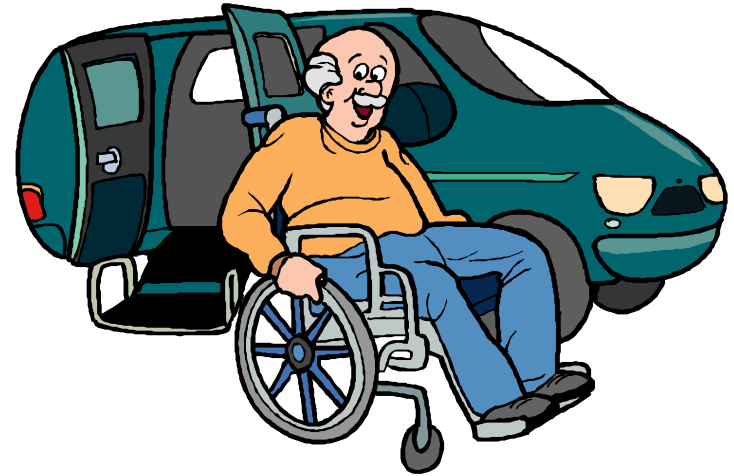
Make a list of things to tell your doctor:

- How you feel, where it hurts
- Has this happened before?
- Changes in mood, amount of energy, sleep, eating, bathroom habits, other changes in your life.
- What medicines you take.



# Getting Ready

- Decide how you will get there
- Decide what time you need to leave to get there 15 minutes before your appointment
- Do you want anyone to go with you?



# Medical Information To Bring

- Who to call in emergency
- List of medicines you take
- Allergies
- Health problems you have
- Immunizations
- Surgeries or serious illness in the past
- Accommodations you need
- Insurance or Medicaid card





**If you get nervous**

---

**What makes you  
nervous?**

# Tips to Calm Down

- Get there early so you are not rushed
- Tell the doctor or nurse about what makes you nervous
- Take a friend or support person with you
- Breathe slowly
- Look away (if you are getting a shot)
- Think happy thoughts

# At the appointment

- Ask the doctor to explain everything.
- If you are sick, ask what is wrong and what are the choices to treat it
- Can other people catch it from you?
- Get written instructions
- If they do a test, ask how you will find out the results
- Do you need to come back? When?



# Medicine

- If doctor prescribes medicine, ask
  - What is it for?
  - How long until it makes me feel better?
  - Instructions about taking it (how much, when, with or without food, etc.)
  - What should I do if it makes me feel bad or I get a rash?
  - Will I need any blood tests while I am taking this?



# When you get home

- Tell someone you trust what the doctor said to make sure you understand the instructions
- If you are taking a new medicine, pay close attention to how it makes you feel
- If you must go back for a follow up appointment, write it down on your calendar

# Rights About Healthcare Decisions

- Decide about your healthcare:
  - Choose your doctors
  - Ask questions so you understand your choices
  - Decide if you want tests done
  - Decide if you want treatment
  - Decide what kind of treatment is best for you



# Rights About Healthcare Decisions

- Challenge a determination that you lack capacity
  - This means your doctor and another doctor or a nurse have decided that you are not able to decide about your healthcare



# Rights About Healthcare Decisions

- If you challenge this by saying that they are wrong and you CAN decide, then they must let you decide or convince a court that you can't.
- If you have a court appointed guardian with power over your healthcare, you must go to court to challenge that too.





# Rights About Healthcare Decisions

- Create an Advance Directive
  - Name a surrogate healthcare decision maker that you trust
  - State your wishes about future medical treatments
  - State what treatments you do not want

# Rights About Healthcare Decisions

- You can change or revoke an advance directive
  - Revoke means you do not want to have an advance directive any more, so you get rid of it
  - If you change your mind you must tell your doctor
  - If your advance directive is written you must put the change on the paper or destroy the paper

# Rights About Healthcare Decisions

- No body can force you create an advance directive
  - If you don't have an advance directive, and you are not able to decide for yourself, a surrogate healthcare decision maker will be appointed for you. It will be the 1st person from this list that they can find:
    - Your husband or wife
    - A person who is like a husband or wife to you
    - Your child, if they are an adult
    - Your mother or father
    - Your brother or sister, if they are an adult
    - Your grandmother or grandfather
    - An adult friend who has shown that they care about you and know your wishes

# Who do you trust?

- Knows you very well
- Can be reached quick
- Someone who will stand up for your wishes
- An adult (older than 18)
- Doesn't work for an agency providing services to you

# Treatment Issues

- How do you handle pain?

OUCH!

# Treatment Issues

- How do you feel about being hooked up to machines to keep you alive?



# Treatment Issues

- Do you want CPR if your heart or lungs stop working?



# Treatment Issues

- What do you think about feeding tubes?





# Treatment Issues

- Are blood transfusions okay with you?



# Death & Dying

- If you are going to die, where would you like to be when it happens?
- Do you want to be cremated or buried?
- What do you want your funeral to be like?
- How do you want to be remembered?

