

## Summary 5. Talk with Your Doctor



The most satisfied patients take part in talks and decisions about their healthcare. Talk with your doctor in an open and honest way. This can lead to better and safer healthcare decisions.

### Tips on talking with your doctor

#### Before you see the doctor:

- Write down your health needs and what you expect. Share them with your doctor.
- Write down your questions before you go.
- Write a list of your main symptoms, if there is a problem.
- Carry and show a current *It's Safe to Ask* medication card.
- Give your medical history.
- Ask your patient advocate to help, if you have trouble talking about your health concerns.

#### During the appointment:

- Share your needs, symptoms and your wishes.
- Do not expect to deal with all your concerns in one visit.
- Ask your questions. Use the *It's Safe to Ask* questions:
  1. What is my health problem?
  2. What do I need to do?
  3. Why do I need to do this?
- Listen to your doctor's answers.
- Answer honestly the questions your doctor asks.
- Ask the doctor to explain again, if you don't understand.
- Ask about your healthcare plan.
- Ask what you are to do, when and why.
- Take notes.
- Share your views and concerns.
- Make healthcare decisions together.

#### Before you leave:

- State the key facts talked about.
- Ask for a second opinion, if you still have concerns.
- Ask for resources and websites where you can learn more.
- Ask if a follow up visit is needed.

If you need to find or change doctors, call your regional health authority or check the Manitoba Health website at [www.gov.mb.ca/health/guide/4.html](http://www.gov.mb.ca/health/guide/4.html).

If you are looking for a family doctor, call the Family Doctor Connection line:

Phone: 786-7111 in Winnipeg

Toll-free 1-866-690-8260

TTY/TDD: 774-8618

Toll-free 1-800-855-0511 (Manitoba Relay Services)

**Learn...to be SAFE.** Go to Manitoba Institute for Patient Safety websites [www.safetoask.ca](http://www.safetoask.ca) and [www.mbips.ca](http://www.mbips.ca).