



Depression Center Toolkit

Educational resources, tools, and strategies for mental well-being.

Getting Ready for Your First Appointment

This tool helps you prepare for your first appointment with a health care provider. It can guide your conversation and help you share important details about your health, feelings, and experiences. Use it to note questions you may be asked and those you want to ask your provider.

Instructions: Print this document and note your answers and questions before your appointment day. Bring it with you when you see your provider.

Your health background

What health conditions do you have now or have you had in the past?

Do physical or mental health conditions run in your family?

What prescription or over-the-counter medications do you take? Include the doses and the times you take them.

Do you use alcohol, tobacco, or other substances? How much and how often?

Are you allergic to any foods, medications, or materials? If so, list below.

Are you currently seeing any other health care professionals?

Describe any physical problems you may be having, such as:

- Changes in appetite or weight
 - Feeling tired or having trouble sleeping
 - Low energy or unexplained aches and pains
 - Sexual health concerns
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Describe any emotional changes you've noticed, such as:

- Feeling sad, hopeless, or guilty
 - Feeling angry or easily frustrated
 - Losing interest in friends, family or activities you used to enjoy
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Describe any problems with focusing, making decisions, or remembering things. Include any thoughts of self-harm or experiences like hearing or seeing things others don't.

Describe any patterns of withdrawing from people, missing work or school, or using alcohol or drugs more than usual.

Describe any recent life changes or stressful events that may have affected your mood or well-being.

Note any other issues or concerns you wish to discuss with your health care provider:

Questions to ask your health care provider

If medication is recommended:

What is the name of this medication?

How much should I take, and when should I take it? Should I take it with food?

What should I do if I forget to take a dose?

Is there a lower-cost (generic) version available?

What side effects should I expect?

How long will it take to notice an effect?

Is there anything else I should know while taking this medication?

If psychotherapy is recommended:

What type of therapy do you recommend, and why?

How long does it usually take to see improvement?

Do you suggest a specific therapist? What are their qualifications? Why is this therapist a good fit for me?

For more mental health educational information, visit depressioncenter.org/toolkit. This document provides general educational information developed by the Eisenberg Family Depression Center. It is not a substitute for professional medical advice. Please consult your health care provider if you have questions about your health or treatment options.