

WHAT IS A DIAGNOSIS?



A DIAGNOSIS IS A NAME OR LABEL A PROVIDER GIVES TO DESCRIBE YOUR SYMPTOMS

THREE COMMON TYPES OF MISDIAGNOSIS

- **Missed diagnosis**
 - There is a condition present but the doctor does not recognize it
 - For example, labeling a persistent headache as stress when it's actually a sinus infection
- **Wrong Diagnosis**
 - When a patient receives a label or diagnosis but it's the wrong one
 - For example, treating chest pain as acid reflux when it's actually a heart problem
- **Delayed Diagnosis**
 - When a correct diagnosis happens but after a delay
 - For example, dismissing a patient's early warning signs of diabetes for months

Each of these can delay care and lead to treatments that don't help or even cause harm

STEPS TO BE PREPARED

- Prepare for your appointment
 - Write down your symptoms, when they started, how often they occur and what makes them better or worse
 - List all medications including vitamins and supplements
- Speak up and ask questions
 - If something does not make sense, ask your provider to explain it in a different way
 - Ask about alternative diagnoses
- Keep records and follow up
 - Bring copies of past test results, imaging scans and notes from other doctors
 - If symptoms do not change or improve, schedule a follow up appointment immediately
- Seek a second opinion when needed
 - Many hospitals and clinics welcome second opinions to ensure accuracy



YOU ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT MEMBER OF YOUR HEALTHCARE TEAM.

PATIENT CHECKLIST: DIAGNOSES

Write Down Your Symptoms	Symptoms: Start date: How often: What makes it better: What makes it worse:
Write Down Any Medications & Supplements	
Write Down Any Questions to Ask	1. 2. 3. 4. 5.

Notes:
