

TALKING TO YOUR DOCTOR



IT'S CRITICAL THAT YOU HAVE AN OPEN, HONEST RELATIONSHIP WITH YOUR DOCTOR.

Better communication means better outcomes, fewer errors, and a quicker recovery.

DEMAND THE BEST CARE:

- Don't assume that every treatment or test is right for you. Be sure to ask your doctor what is really necessary.
- Ask to collaborate on a treatment plan that is tailored to your wants and needs.
- Before your visit, think about and write down any questions you may have. Ask questions when you are unsure of what you are being told, or when something unexpected happens.

ASKING ABOUT MEDICAL ERRORS:

- Try to discuss medical errors at the beginning of the doctor-patient relationship.
- Gently ask what errors your doctor may have made in the past, what happened to the patient, and what the doctor learned from the experience.



What is a patient advocate and why should I have one?

It is a good idea to have a designated person who can help you manage your care. A patient or health care advocate watches out for you while you are in the hospital. Talk to your doctor to see if your hospital has a patient advocate.

