

# SUMMARY OF TIPS for getting good quality health care *before, during, and after* a health care appointment

## **Before your health care appointment**

- If you need help or advice right away, call the “nurse advice line” or “medical help line” at your health plan or doctor’s office.
- Get ready for your appointment by looking for information to help understand your health condition, symptoms, or treatment choices.
- Make a list of questions you want to ask and write down health information such as medications you are taking and allergies. Take these lists to your appointment.
- Consider asking a friend or family member to go with you to your appointment.

## **During your health care appointment**

- Ask plenty of questions – and if you don’t understand the answers, ask again.
- It can be hard to absorb what your health provider tells you, especially if the information is complicated or includes technical medical terms. To double check your understanding, it helps to repeat what you’ve heard using your own words.
- Take notes to help you remember what was said and what you need to do.

## **Following through on treatment and managing your health**

- Whenever you start new medication or treatment, watch carefully for possible side effects or other problems.
- Find and use information to help understand your health condition and treatment. If you have a long-term health condition, learn ways to stay healthy with your condition and get the support you need.

For more discussion of the tips summarized on this page, visit CVT’s Web site [www.cvtrust.org/resources/beinformedbeinvolved](http://www.cvtrust.org/resources/beinformedbeinvolved) for these resources: *Tips on what to do before your health care appointment*; *Tips on what to do during your health care appointment*; and *Tips for following through on treatment and managing your health*.

Source: These materials were adapted from the *Communication Toolkit: Using information to get high quality care*. The American Institutes for Research developed the Toolkit materials with funding from the California HealthCare Foundation. The National Business Group on Health maintains and host the Toolkit website.



This document is part of California’s Valued Trust (CVT) educational series

**Be Informed. Be Involved.**  
*Know your health care choices.*

