

Keeping your health and wellbeing in the know

MyHealthTALK

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Courtesy of Asset Health



Make the Most of Your Doctor Visit

Think of your last visit to the doctor. Did you leave feeling like you didn't get your questions answered? Or maybe you felt confused about advice you'd been given. An appointment with your doctor that you waited weeks for can be over in a flash, but there are ways to make the visit more impactful.

The time you get with your doctor, however brief, is important for both of you. You and your doctor need accurate information about your health in order to properly maintain it. So what can you do to maximize the time you get with your physician?



KNOW YOUR HISTORY

Coming in armed with accurate family history and personal health history can help the doctor determine which tests should be done and whether you are at higher risk for disease. Having this information can also help make sense of your symptoms.

WRITE DOWN

 any information you want to remember (symptoms, questions, medications, etc.)

It's easy to get flustered sitting on the exam table in a paper robe, so write down those things you wanted to be sure to discuss. Keep track of your symptoms and anything else that might be relevant to your condition leading up to the appointment.

FIGURE OUT

 which topics you want to cover.

You and your doctor can't cover everything during a visit, so narrow down your list to two or three important topics and let your doctor know that you'd like to go over them.

ASK QUESTIONS

You deserve to have all the information about your own health. Take notes during your visit, and don't be afraid to ask questions about a test being ordered, a new medication or your diagnosis. This goes for after the appointment, too. Ask your physician for the best way to get in touch with her after the visit should you have further questions.

"What doctors don't tell you (but should!)," Dr. Danielle Ofri, CNN.com, June 10, 2013.

"5 ways to maximize your doctor's visit," Dr. Gopal Chopra, CNN.com, May 14, 2013.

•PARK YOUR PHONE•

We all know that texting and driving is dangerous, and talking on the phone while driving isn't much better. Almost every state has laws restricting cell phone use while driving, and many drivers have turned to hands-free devices to chat in the car. That might seem like the safer option, but new research shows that even hands-free devices distract drivers.

The AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety found that even when drivers keep their hands on the wheel and eyes on the road, they can still put their brains into overload by talking while driving. The AAA study found that distraction causes reaction times to slow and brain function to be compromised.

The voice-activated gadgets being built right into cars, such as email and stereo features, are limiting attentiveness as well. Responding to voice-activated functions such as these was among the riskiest activities in the study.

The researchers at the University of Utah measured brain waves, eye movements and other metrics to see how drivers fared while attempting to do other activities behind the wheel. Listening to the radio ranked as a distraction level of "1," or minimal risk. Listening and responding to voice-activated email features, however, were a "3," or extensive risk.

Drivers are being urged to limit their use of voice-activated technology that does not relate directly to driving. Disabling some functions altogether may limit a driver's temptation to use them. Those emails can wait. While driving, keep your eyes, and attention, on the road!



TAKE SHELTER FROM THE HEAT

Did you know that extreme heat causes more deaths in the United States every year than tornadoes, hurricanes, floods and lightning combined? According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, extreme heat, which is defined as above average temperatures that can last for weeks, is the cause of over 650 deaths in the U.S. annually. Keep these tips in mind when the temperature goes up.



- Stay in air conditioning as much as possible. Look for air-conditioned shelters in your area if you don't have AC at home.
- Avoid direct sunlight.
- Take cool showers or baths.
- Wear light-colored, lightweight clothing.
- Stay hydrated. Do not wait until you are thirsty to drink. Keep drinking throughout the day and avoid sugary or alcoholic drinks.
- Learn the symptoms of heat stroke, which requires immediate medical attention. Symptoms include rapid and strong pulse, possible unconsciousness, a high body temperature and hot, red, dry or moist skin.
- Keep each other safe. Remind everyone around you to keep hydrated and check on those who do not have air conditioning.

Infuse Your Water

Water is the best way to get hydrated, but you can change up the flavor by adding fruits and herbs! It's as easy as slicing up whichever fruit and herbs you like, adding water, and letting it all chill in the refrigerator. There are even special pitchers that make it easy to strain the water. Look online for recipes or try some of your own combinations. *Drink up!*

Try these great ingredients to add flavor to your water:



- Lemons
- Limes
- Cucumbers
- Mint
- Strawberries
- Blueberries
- Blackberries
- Pineapple
- Basil
- Oranges