

Preparing to Discuss ME/CFS with a Healthcare Provider (Myalgic Encephalomyelitis/Chronic Fatigue Syndrome)

If you think you or a loved one may have ME/CFS, taking a few steps to prepare for your meeting with a healthcare provider can make all the difference in getting the proper medical evaluation, diagnosis, and treatment. You play a vital role in helping healthcare providers understand your symptoms (or your family member's symptoms) and how they affect your daily life.

BEFORE YOUR VISIT



Prepare a list of your current and past healthcare providers, especially if you are seeing a new healthcare provider for the first time.



Prepare a brief history that summarizes your experience with this illness.

For example, write down

- a list of your symptoms
- when your symptoms started
- what makes your symptoms worse
- how the symptoms affect your activities
- how often symptoms occur
- how you have been feeling

Also, try to describe examples of your best and worst days. Select your most important issues (sometimes referred to as “chief complaints”) and write them down.



Prepare a list of medications and supplements you are taking.

Most healthcare providers will ask you to provide this information at each visit. Bringing your list with you will help keep track. A worksheet that can make this easier to record your medications is available at www.cdc.gov/me-cfs.



Consider bringing a family member or friend with you to provide support.

This person can also help you take notes and remember what happened at the visit with your healthcare provider.

The provider you visit could be a doctor, nurse, nurse practitioner, physician assistant, or other type of healthcare professional. It may take more than one visit to evaluate potential ME/CFS symptoms and determine an accurate diagnosis.

Some healthcare providers are still learning about ME/CFS. CDC, through a partnership with Medscape, provides continuing medical education (CME) courses for healthcare providers and has a website section for healthcare providers <https://www.cdc.gov/me-cfs/healthcare-providers/index.html> to increase providers' knowledge of the disease.

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Centers for Disease
Control and Prevention
National Center for Emerging and
Zoonotic Infectious Diseases

**For more information on ME/CFS,
please visit www.cdc.gov/me-cfs.**