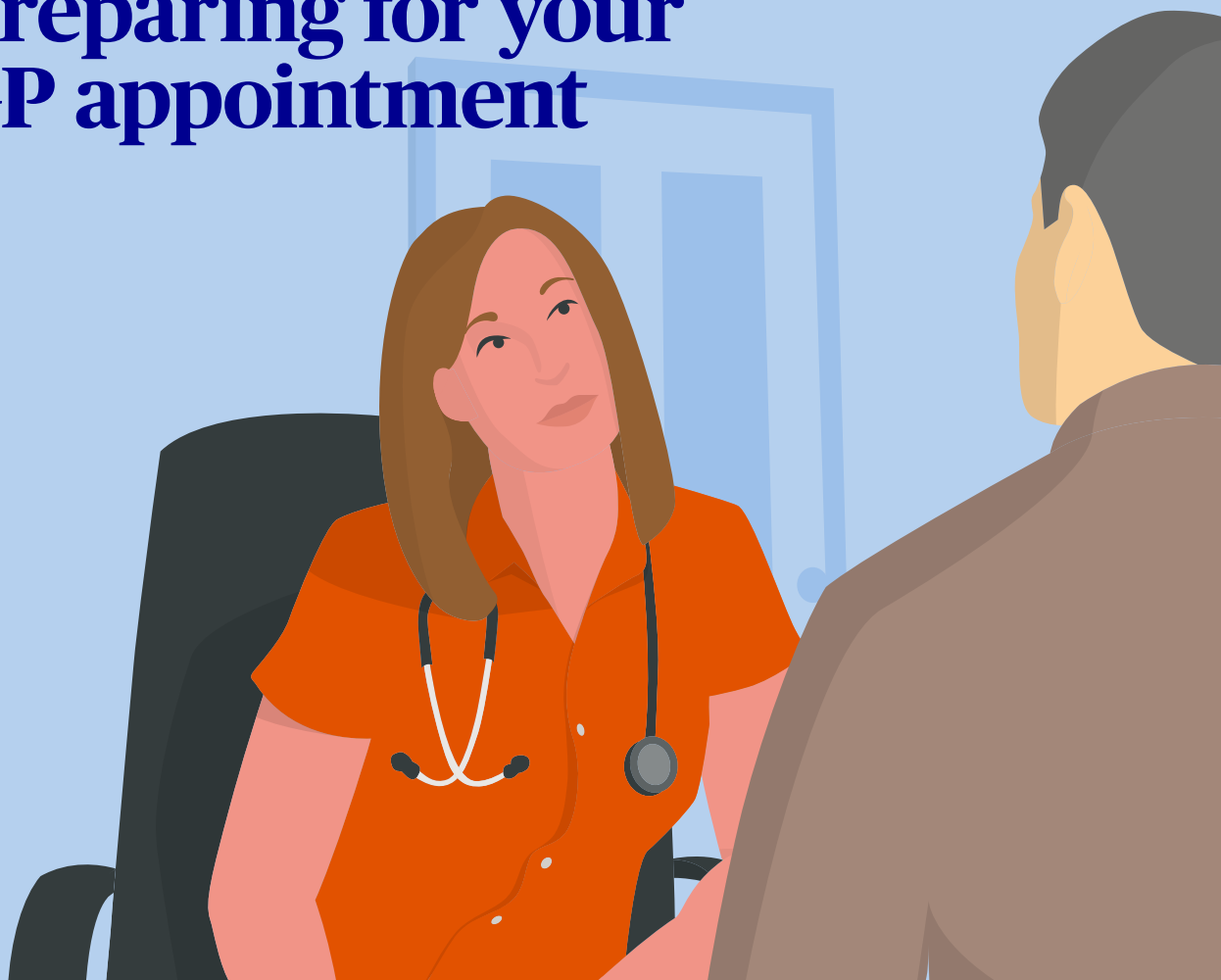


Preparing for your GP appointment



Tips for getting the most from your consultation

Whether you're talking to your GP by phone, video call or at their surgery, it's important that you get everything you need out of your appointment.

This guide will help you feel confident you've covered everything. And prepared for the types of questions your GP might ask you about your health.

Tell your doctor exactly what the matter is



Don't be embarrassed about describing your symptoms. Your GP is a professional and will have heard it all before.

- ✓ Remember to describe anything unusual, even if it doesn't seem relevant.
- ✓ Explain how long you've experienced symptoms and when they first appeared.
- ✓ Describe anything new, like lumps, bumps or rashes, changes to how often you go to the loo, fatigue – anything at all.
- ✓ Explain if anyone in the family has had similar problems.
- ✓ Mention if you've been seen by other doctors about the same symptoms before and what they thought.
- ✓ If you've experienced any pain, explain where it is and describe its intensity on a scale of 1 (mild) to 10 (unbearable).
- ✓ Explain if the pain is sharp or dull, and what makes it worse or better.

Have answers to these common questions ready



Your consultant or practitioner will lead the conversation but you'll get more from your appointment if you've thought through these questions. (There are plenty of other questions your doctor may ask, too, but these are the most common ones.)

- ? Do you have some thoughts about what's going on? Talking to the consultant about your ideas can help them confirm if you're right, reassure you, or explain why they think it's something different.
- ? Do you have existing conditions or illnesses and are you taking medication for them?
- ? Do you take over-the-counter herbal remedies, vitamins or supplements?
- ? Do you have any allergies?

Think about the questions you might want to ask



The answers to these will help you understand what to do next and help you decide if you need another appointment. Here are some you could think about.

- ? What does the doctor recommend?
- ? How long will it be before you know any treatment is working?
- ? Is there anything you need to do to help yourself?
- ? What should you avoid doing?
- ? What should you do if your symptoms get worse?
- ? Who should you contact if you have any more problems or questions?

What next?

At the end of your consultation, make sure you're clear about what should happen next and that you understand any advice that you've been given.

If you're unsure, ask.

Don't forget, the Health at Hand team are on hand to help if there's something you've forgotten to ask, or if you have questions about any medication you've been given. You can call them on **0800 003 004** or email healthathand.health@axahealth.co.uk¹



Health

¹Midwives and pharmacists are available Monday to Friday 8am–8pm, Saturday 8am–4pm, Sunday 8am–12pm. Nurses and counsellors are available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Calls may be recorded and/or monitored for quality assurance, training and as a record of the conversation.

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