



waiting, things might work out better. Better than persistent illness, bad feelings and lawsuits.¶

Getting the Most Out Of Your Doctor Gentle Reminders and Diligent Advocacy

Having money and health insurance doesn't necessarily guarantee good medical care. For proof, just consider the case of Michael Jackson. For the insured, your choice of doctor and active engagement in the medical process of *your* health, largely determine the quality of care you will receive. A little luck and the absence of mistakes helps, too.

A doctor who cares, examines, thinks and follows-up makes a huge difference. Even a good doctor, though, can slip. Fortunately for the others, but not for you, you aren't your doctor's only patient. A good doctor's visit might make you feel that you are, but large numbers of patients and limited time often means that issues, test results, and follow-up may get missed.

That's where gentle reminders help your advocating for yourself. Don't let the doctor terminate the visit without addressing all your concerns and examining all the necessary body parts. If your foot hurts, make sure you take off your shoe and sock and stick it out to be examined.

If you don't hear about results, call. Then make sure there is a plan for the next step. This can be done courteously, as in "You must be busy, so I'm just checking on my test results... What do we do next?" Don't hang up until you have a concrete plan, even if it's just a promised return phone call. How congenial can you get?

A bad alternative would be to passively wait at home for results and a plan, stewing when you don't hear from the office. You end up severely anxious or forgotten, with worse symptoms or bad outcome. If you had just made a follow-up query, reminding the office that you still existed and were out there

Published by

HEALTHY CHOICES FOR MIND AND BODY

Written by Ann Gerhardt, MD