

# WORKING WITH YOUR HEALTHCARE TEAM

Studies have shown that good communication with healthcare providers can have a big impact not only on the quality of care you receive but on your own confidence and satisfaction.

This worksheet offers practical suggestions to help you form a stronger relationship with your healthcare team. Print out these pages and use the spaces provided to take notes, write out your questions, and record contact information.

## YOUR GUIDE TO BETTER COMMUNICATION

**Before your appointment:** Whether you are going to a new doctor or someone you've seen many times, take these steps:

- Call ahead to see if you need to do anything before the appointment, such as avoiding food or liquids for a certain amount of time
- Make a list of your questions and concerns; write down the most important questions first
- Bring a list of all the medications you take—including over-the-counter drugs and any herbal remedies and nutritional supplements (also note their ingredients)

**During your appointment:** Some patients wait until they are asked before they talk about health issues, but that's a sure way for important information to be left out. Ask the questions on your list, and:

- Don't let yourself think "I wish my doctor had asked"; tell your care providers about your symptoms, medication side effects, or other issues
- Ask for explanations if terms or instructions are not clear (if you don't ask questions, your doctor will assume that you understand)
- Talk about how you feel both physically and emotionally
- Tell your doctor everything, even if you think it's embarrassing or not relevant—it may be very important to your doctor!

**After your appointment:**

- Ask what information you will need to bring next time
- If you have questions or have forgotten instructions, call the office to get the information you need
- If you need tests, schedule an appointment right away to get them done

Write your three most important questions here.

1

2

3

Use this space to make notes about any symptoms or problems you want to discuss—even if they don't relate to your breathing.

Use this space to write reminders about your next appointment.

DATE & TIME

NOTES