

Speak Up - Prevent Errors in Your Child's Care The Basics

Your child's health and safety are important to doctors, nurses, and other caregivers. You can make a difference in your child's care by asking the right questions and being actively involved.

What can you do to prepare for your child's visit to the doctor's office or hospital?

It's helpful to write down the following information:

- Your child's medical history. Include vaccinations, allergies, current health problems, and the dates of any surgeries and hospital visits.
- A list of your child's medicines. Include prescription and over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, and herbs. Include the amounts your child takes.
- Questions you have about your child's health.

Share this mother doctor information with your child's doctor and other caregivers.



What should you ask the doctor?

Find out about all the tests and treatments for your child's illness or injury. Ask how a treatment will help your child. Understand that more tests or treatments are not always better for your child.

What if you do not understand what the doctor is saying?

Tell the doctor you do not understand. Ask more questions. By asking questions you are helping the doctor understand what you need. Tell the doctor if you need someone who speaks your language.

How can you help prevent your child from getting an infection?

Remind caregivers to wash or clean their hands before touching your child. Handwashing helps prevent infection. Remind caregivers to wear clean gloves when they do tasks such as taking blood, touching wounds or examining your child's private parts.

Text adapted from a brochure in the "SpeakUP" series by The Joint Commission.

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