

HOW TO GET THE MOST OUT OF YOUR CLINIC VISIT/ CONSULTATION

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BEFORE THE VISIT-PREPARE

- How long is the visit? (It goes faster than you think!)
- Can you bring friends, family?
 - Have something to write with, or record (with permission) or appoint a 'second set of ears'
- Have all the records arrived for the consult?
- Bring your medications, including supplements-there are interactions that would surprise you

DURING THE VISIT

- Time goes quickly! A 60 minute visit is really 30-45... a 30 minute visit is more like 15...
- Prioritize questions
 - These should all be related directly to myeloma
 - Try to keep your questions to top 3 (when possible)
 - Do your homework!
 - A working knowledge of basic labs and myeloma labs is CRITICAL to your understanding the direction of the plan

DURING THE VISIT

- If there is language that is not clear (we're speaking Latin!) speak up.
- You may see a Physician Assistant, or Nurse Practitioner for some visits –This is good, your team just got bigger!
- Scheduling, insurance, which pharmacy to use, where to park, etc are all questions for other members of your team (scheduler, social worker, etc)

WHAT TO WALK AWAY WITH AFTER YOUR VISIT

- Do I need treatment now; a change in treatment? (In other words is disease controlled, or are changes needed for better control)
- What clinical trials are available?
- What are YOU willing to do, given the advice you received???
 - Is driving to clinic twice weekly (for example) doable for you?
 - Are you willing to stay for long days of blood draws?

PROS AND CONS OF CLINICAL TRIALS

- PROS:
 - You have the benefit of receiving 'cutting edge' therapy that is being investigated for future myeloma patients
 - There are more 'eyes' on you, more often. The team includes RNs, pharmacists, your provider, the study sponsor, local research group, the list goes on.
 - Many studies are willing to compensate for not only the treatment, but transportation, lodging, etc.
 - You are receiving the care you are because of patients who have participated in trials; moving the needle forward in myeloma therapy. You are making it possible for people who have not yet received this diagnosis to receive potentially even better care than you are currently.

PROS AND CONS CONTINUED

- **CONS:**
 - More visits, more labs. Can be long days.
 - Trials open and close, so it is very hard to know what may be available when you need it
 - There is always a possibility because of how trials are designed, that you may not get the treatment arm that you were hoping for