

IMPROVING YOUR OFFICE VISIT

Our goal is to provide you with good patient care and treatment and to make the most of your office visit today. Optimal results can only occur when you, the patient, become a partner in your healthcare by asking questions, ensuring your understanding of your care and treatment, and agreeing with treatment plans offered by Dr. Robert L. Potempa.

Before you are seen:

- Think about what you want to tell Dr. Robert L. Potempa.
- If this is a follow-up visit for the same medical condition, are you better? Worse? What works best? What doesn't work?
- What are your symptoms?
- What makes your symptoms better or worse?
- What questions do you have?
- Do you need a prescription refilled?

During your visit:

- Tell Dr. Robert L. Potempa about:
 - What you have learned about your condition from other sources.
 - What you think the problem is.
 - What concerns you most.
 - Any tests or x-rays you have had and the results.
 - Any health conditions you have such as diabetes or circulation problems.
 - All drugs you are taking including prescription and over-the-counter medications, herbal products, nutritional supplements, and recreational drugs. (Make a list or put your drugs in a paper bag and bring to the office.)
 - All allergies you have.
- Answer the doctor's questions.
- Ask the doctor questions. (There are no "stupid" questions, please ask about anything you do not understand or would like to know more about.) Such as:
 - Do I need to tell my other doctors about this visit and care?
 - Are there other options for treatment? What's good and bad about each option?
 - How long will it take to get better or heal?
 - What medications do I need?
- If you don't understand the doctor's instructions or explanations don't be afraid to ask for clarification.
- Tell the doctor if you can't follow the treatment plan he/she suggests. For example, if the plan of treatment interferes with your work schedule or family obligations. Together you may be able to work out a plan that you will be able to follow.
- If you are considering surgery, ask the doctor to explain the procedure, the benefits, the risks, the costs, and alternatives to surgery.