

A) Visiting your Health Provider Key Words

Card

Medically

Concerns

Nurse

Condition

Partnership

Detail

Provider

Effort

Question

Emergency

Responsibility

Hearing

Stressful

List

Symptom

B) Introduction

Learning Outcomes

At the end of Lesson 6, learners should be able to:

- a) **use** the words that are listed in the Lesson 6 key words list and discuss what they mean in the context of this lesson and in their lives
- b) **indicate** the important things to consider when visiting a health provider
- c) **list** concerns or questions to ask while visiting a health provider

The literacy activities in Lesson 6

The types of literacy activities in Lesson 6 are:

- a) **Reading** exercise on “Visiting your Health Provider”
- b) **Fill-in-the-blanks** with words from the above reading material that are on the key words list
- c) **Word search** - to find the words that are listed in the Visiting your Health Provider key words list
- b) **Matching-the-columns** exercise
- c) **Writing** exercises on things to consider when visiting health providers and what concerns or questions to bring

Activities are explained further in the lesson. Facilitators may use additional literacy activities to help learners enhance their understanding of visiting health providers.

C) Reading Exercise

Facilitator Notes: According to the SMOG test, the following text is written at about a Grade 9 or 10 reading level, or literacy level 2 and can be read using *assisted* or *choral* reading techniques. In *assisted* reading, facilitator and learners take turns reading parts of the text, whereas *choral* reading involves reading together. These techniques are described further in Section 2 of the manual of the Nova Scotia Tutor & Instructor Training and Certification Program.

Learner Activity**Visiting your Health Provider**

We all see doctors, nurses or pharmacists at one time or another. These visits are usually important, so it is good to communicate well and to take an active role in our own health care.

In the past, people simply answered questions and followed directions. Today, we are expected to take more responsibility for our health care by forming a partnership with the provider we are seeing. This takes time and effort for all people involved, and fortunately there are tips that can help get you started.

Be prepared: Make a list of your concerns. Make a list of what you want to discuss and put the important ones first. Take along your health card and all your medications to every visit. Some people prefer to bring these in a bag. Let the doctor or nurse know if a certain disease or condition runs in your family and ask how to help prevent it.

C) Reading Exercise (continued)

Make sure you can see and hear as well as possible. Many older adults use glasses and hearing aids. Remember to wear these on your visit and to let the providers know if you have a hard time seeing or hearing.

Consider bringing a family member or friend. Sometimes these visits can be stressful, so it is good to bring a family member or friend with you. This person can help by reminding you of what you want from the visit, remembering what the provider said, or can take notes for you.

Plan to update the doctor or nurse. It is important to let them know if anything has happened since your last visit, such as a visit to emergency, changes in appetite, weight, sleep, or energy level. Take time to make notes about symptoms you may have, and when they started, what time of day, how long they lasted, and how often. Also tell about any changes in medication or the effect it has on you.

Your provider may ask how life is going for you. Information on major changes or stresses in your life such as divorce or death of a loved one may be useful medically. There is no need to go into details but statements like “my sister died since my last visit” or “I had to sell my home and move in with my daughter” are helpful.

Other tips that help with visits to medical providers are 1) *be honest*, 2) *stick to the point*, 3) *ask questions*, 4) *share your point of view*.

(Adapted from *Talking with your Doctor: A Guide for Older People*, Ageing International, Winter 2003, Vol.28, No.1, p.98-113.)

D) Fill-in-the-Blanks Activity

Facilitator Notes: Having read the first text, learners are then asked to re-read the same text by filling the blanks with words from the key word list. This activity helps to re-enforce learning from the first reading and to place words in context.

Learner Activity

Visiting your Health Provider

We all see doctors, nurses or pharmacists at one time or another. These visits are usually important, so it is good to communicate well and to take an active role in our own health care.

In the past, people simply answered questions and followed directions. Today, we are expected to take more _____ for our health care by forming a _____ with the provider we are seeing. This takes time and _____ for all people involved, and fortunately there are tips that can help get you started.

Be prepared: Make a list of your _____. Make a _____ of what you want to discuss and put the important ones first. Take along your health _____ and all your medications to every visit. Some people prefer to bring these in a bag. Let the doctor or _____ know if a certain disease or _____ runs in your family and ask how to help prevent it.

D) Fill-in-the-Blanks Activity (continued)

Make sure you can see and hear as well as possible. Many older adults use glasses and _____ aids. Remember to wear these on your visit and to let the _____ know if you have a hard time seeing or hearing.

Consider bringing a family member or friend. Sometimes these visits can be _____, so it is good to bring a family member or friend with you. This person can help by reminding you of what you want from the visit, remembering what the provider said, or can take notes for you.

Plan to update the doctor or nurse. It is important to let them know if anything has happened since your last visit, such as a visit to _____, changes in appetite, weight, sleep, or energy level. Take time to make notes about _____ you may have, and when they started, what time of day, how long they lasted, and how often. Also tell about any changes in medication or the effect it has on you.

Your provider may ask how life is going for you. Information on major changes or stresses in your life such as divorce or death of a loved one may be useful _____. There is no need to go into _____ but statements like “my sister died since my last visit” or “I had to sell my home and move in with my daughter” are helpful.

Other tips that help with visits to medical providers are 1) *be honest*, 2) *stick to the point*, 3) *ask _____*, 4) *share your point of view*.

E) Word Search Exercise

Facilitator Notes: In this activity learners are asked to circle the words in the puzzle that are found on the key words list in Section A. Learners may find it helpful to list the keywords in the margin. This activity helps with word recognition and recall. (Solutions are found in the appendices.)

Learner Activity

N	O	I	T	I	D	N	O	C	S	B	E
S	A	V	X	E	U	G	A	N	Z	M	Y
W	X	B	T	R	N	R	R	Y	E	E	T
C	A	A	S	I	D	E	L	R	F	W	I
U	I	E	R	X	C	L	G	F	D	X	L
L	X	A	C	N	A	E	O	G	J	C	I
X	E	R	O	C	N	R	R	Z	Y	L	B
H	Z	C	I	C	T	U	O	B	Z	K	I
T	B	D	Y	I	M	O	T	P	M	Y	S
B	E	O	O	T	B	I	D	A	C	X	N
M	W	I	S	U	Z	B	W	U	O	Z	O
Z	P	I	H	S	R	E	N	T	R	A	P
Y	L	D	L	U	F	S	S	E	R	T	S
C	X	Z	N	O	I	T	S	E	U	Q	E
U	R	E	D	I	V	O	R	P	C	B	R

F) Matching-the-Columns Exercise

Facilitator Notes: In this activity, learners are asked to enter the number of the word on the left hand column that best matches a phrase on the right hand column. (Answers are found in the appendices.)

Learner Activity

- | | |
|-------------------|--|
| 1. concerns | a. helpful to have one come with you (_) |
| 2. medications | b. will answer questions about your drugs (_) |
| 3. symptoms | c. this means it's up to us (_) |
| 4. stress | d. trained to do some of the doctor's work (_) |
| 5. partnership | e. these will help you understand (_) |
| 6. responsibility | f. some people bring these in a bag (_) |
| 7. friend | g. say the important ones first (_) |
| 8. pharmacist | h. important to say when they started (_) |
| 9. nurse | i. working together (_) |
| 10. questions | j. losing a friend can cause this (_) |

G) Writing Exercises

Facilitator Notes:

- a) **Important things to consider when visiting health providers:** Using some of the key words learned in this lesson, learners can be asked to write about some of the things that have helped their visit to a health provider.

Learner Activity

The things that have helped my visit to a health provider are

G) Writing Exercises (continued)

- b) **Questions or concerns:** Learners should try to write a list of questions or concerns they may bring to a health provider.

Learner Activity

Some health concerns I want to talk about are

Some questions I would like to ask are

References and Resources

Title	Information
<i>Questions to Ask Your Doctor and Pharmacist: A Guide for Seniors</i>	<p>These are questions published for older Manitobans about medications, and programs available in that province. It was developed by Manitoba Health and Manitoba Seniors and Healthy Aging Secretariat.</p> <p>www.gov.mb.ca/shas/pdf/questions_05.pdf</p>
<i>Talking with your Doctor: A Guide for Older People</i>	<p>This is an easy-to-read publication from the U.S. National Institute on Aging containing tips, pictures and work sheets on how to develop a good doctor-patient relationship. Downloadable from www.niapublications.org/pubs</p>
<i>The Health Pack-Resource Pack for Literacy Tutors and Healthcare Staff</i>	<p>This is a colorful coil-bound booklet published for residents of the Irish health system, but it can be adapted easily to our system. To order, contact the National Adult Literacy Agency (NALA) 76 Lower Gardiner Street, Dublin 1, Ireland. See www.nala.ie</p>