



Communicating when I visit my doctor

Sometimes going to the doctor can be difficult, right? Especially if you're deaf and it's hard to communicate!

Your doctor might turn away when they're talking to you, or you might not hear the receptionist when they call your name.

It is really important that communication with your doctor is clear so you don't miss out on important information that will help you stay in good health.

Remind your doctor to look at you when they are talking to you.

If you haven't understood, ask your doctor to say it again or in a different way.

If there is no visual or vibrating alert system, remind reception staff that you are deaf and that they need to come and get you when it's time for your appointment. This will mean you can relax knowing someone will come and get you.

my life
my health

“I find that really difficult when I go to the doctor's. It goes way over my head. I need them to use simple words – clear, brief language, give examples.”

Use BSL?

Interpreters are there to support you during your appointment. Check out this video to find out what it's like to have an interpreter in your doctor's appointment.

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Top Tips

- 1 Use the My Life, My Health 'I'm deaf' wallet card when you check in for your appointment.
- 2 If you won't hear staff when they call you, find out if there is a visual or vibrating alert system. If not, ask reception staff to come and get you when it's your turn to be seen. This will mean that you can relax.
- 3 Ask your doctor to face you when they are talking. Ask them to speak clearly and at a normal pace, and not to shout!
- 4 If you haven't understood something, ask them to repeat or rephrase it until you understand. Try writing things down if that helps.
- 5 Don't give up! Remember how important it is that you get this information.
- 6 Take notes or ask for print offs of the information.
- 7 Remember it's your health – you need to be involved to know what's going on!

#mylifemyhealth



Want more information?

Download our other things to help you:

- + 'I'm deaf' wallet card
- + List of health words
- + Template letters to send to your doctor

Your rights

Your doctor's surgery or hospital should be supportive and make you feel comfortable.

Doctors and nurses should have basic deaf awareness training so they know how to communicate clearly. They should make sure you understand what they are saying.

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