

Tips To Help Avoid Medical Diagnostic Errors

Tip #1: Be prepared before you visit your doctor by having a list of symptoms written down so you don't forget anything.

Tip #2: Before your doctor's visit, make a list to bring of your medications, dosages and nutritional supplements to hand to your physician

Tip # 3: If you have a serious health condition, someone should go along to your doctor's visit to be a second set of ears. This is especially important for persons with hearing challenges, or those hesitant to ask questions.

Tip #4: When you visit your doctor, tell them about specialist you are seeing and bring a list of their contact information for your chart.

Tip #5: Don't assume your doctor will figure out what is wrong. While none of us likes to hear bad news, just because a doctor doesn't find it, doesn't mean there isn't a problem.

Tip #6: Don't be afraid to go for a second opinion, and don't discuss what the first doctor said. You should learn what the initial second opinion is independently of the first opinion.

Tip #7: Make sure your doctor is listening to you. If you are being rushed, it may be time to find a new doctor.

Tip #8: Ask your doctor for a differential diagnosis which are the possibilities of what your symptoms can be related to.

Tip #9: Ask questions about diagnosis, treatment options, side effects of drugs, drug interactions.

Tip #10: Before choosing a doctor, consider reviewing websites to gain information about the physician. Here are four:

- www.nydoctorprofile.com this is maintained by New York State Dept. of Health and provides information on doctor's medical training and practice.
- <http://www.health.ny.gov/professionals/doctors/conduct/> The NY Office of Professional Medical Conduct website has information on whether a doctor has been sanctioned or has limited privileges.
- www.nycourts.gov is a legal site showing if a doctor has been sued. Go into tabs "E-courts" and "Web Civil Supreme." Put in a doctor's name in as a *defendant* and cases against that physician will appear.
- www.e-law.com is similar to the site above.

If a doctor has a number of cases, you may want to find a different doctor. For the best ways to switch doctors, please see our blog on the subject, here <http://www.medicalnegligency.com/blog/2017/september/what-to-do-when-its-time-to-switch-doctors.aspx>