

# Talking With Your Doctor

How well you and your doctor communicate with each other is one of the most important parts of getting good health care. Being prepared can help make the most of your visit. Here are some things you can bring:

- Lists of your concerns, any allergies and all the medicines, herbs, or vitamins you take, including dosages if possible
- A description of symptoms-when they started, what makes them better
- A trusted friend or family member
- A way to take notes during your appointment

Make sure you understand your diagnosis and any treatments. Ask your health care provider to write down his or her instructions to you. If you still have trouble understanding, ask where you can go for more information.

## During Your Appointment

### Be Prepared and Ask Questions

You can make sure you get the best possible care by being an active member of your health care team. Being involved means being prepared and asking questions.

During your appointment, make sure to ask the questions you prepared before your appointment. Start by asking the ones that are most important to you.

To get the most from your visit, tell the nurse or person at the front desk that you have questions for your doctor. If your doctor does not ask you if you have questions, ask your doctor when the best time would be to ask them.

## Understanding the answers and next steps

Asking questions is important but so is making sure you hear-and understand-the answers you get. **Take notes.** Or bring someone to your appointment to help you understand and remember what you heard. If you don't understand or are confused, ask your doctor to explain the answer again.

It is very important to understand the plan or next steps that your doctor recommends. Ask questions to make sure you understand what your doctor wants you to do.

The questions you may want to ask will depend on whether your doctor gives you a diagnosis; recommends a treatment, medical test, or surgery; or gives you a prescription for medicine.

You have the right to know how much care will cost before receiving care, both out of pocket and covered. You need to ask!

### Questions could include:

- What is my diagnosis?
- What are my treatment options?
- Will I need a test? What is the test for? What will the results tell me?
- What will the medicine you are prescribing do? How do I take it? Are there any side effects?
- How much will my treatment cost?
- Can I be treated another way that is equally effective but less costly?
- Is there a generic or non-advertised equivalent available?
- Do I need to change my daily routine?

### Did You Know?

Medical schools teach medical students how to talk with patients because the schools know how important doctor-patient communications is good for care.

### OTHER HELPFUL TIPS

These steps will also help prepare for your appointment:

- Ask someone to go to your appointment with you to help you understand and remember answers to your questions
- Create a health history that includes your current conditions and past surgeries or illnesses. Bring it to your appointment
- Know your family's history, such as your parents' health conditions
- Bring all your medicines with you
- Keeping your out-of-pocket costs lower is all about location, location, location.
- Choose freestanding network facilities instead of hospitals for greater cost savings
- Some freestanding facilities include:
  - Ambulatory Surgery Centers
  - Laboratory Facilities
  - MRI Centers
  - Outpatient Diagnostic/Treatment Centers
  - X-Ray and Radiology Facilities



# Website to help you save on your Rx costs

GoodRx

Mobile App Sign Up Log In Help

Stop paying too much for your prescriptions



Type your drug name (like Lipitor, Gabapentin, etc)

FIND THE LOWEST PRICE

Popular searches: Lipitor, Cialis, Neurontin, Prilosec, Synthroid, Lexapro | Browse All Drugs

[www.goodrx.com](http://www.goodrx.com)

- **Locate lowest cost prescription on your medication**
- **Search by drug or condition**
- **Coupons may also apply**

# **Know before you go-MRIs**

- **Did you know that the cost of all procedures are not created equal?**
  - Procedures such as MRIs, labs, colonoscopies can vary greatly in price
  - One of the biggest cost drivers is where this procedure is preformed
- **Utilizing high quality local free-standing healthcare facilities is a great way to help you become a better consumer of your own healthcare plan**
- **Some facilities to consider:**
  - Longstreet Clinic
  - First Look MRI
  - Specialty Clinics of Georgia-must be a patient



# LOW VS. HIGH COST PROVIDERS

## Low Cost Providers



**Gastroenterology Associates**  
of Gainesville, P.C.  
Diagnostic Colonoscopies



**LONGSTREET CLINIC**  
Your Health. Our Specialty.  
MRI, Mammograms and Preventive Care



**GAINESVILLE SURGERY CENTER**  
an affiliate of **SCA**  
Ambulatory Surgical Facility  
Specialty Clinics of Georgia - Orthopaedics  
MRI and X-ray

**Limestone Surgery Center**  
Ambulatory Surgical Facility



**FIRST LOOK**  
— MRI —



**Gainesville Heart & Vascular Group**



## High Cost Providers



The Northeast Georgia Diagnostic Clinic  
(now owned by Northside Hospital-referrals  
will be out of the local area into the Northside  
Hospital system) **\*Effective 10/1/18**



The Imaging Center  
(Owned by Northeast Georgia Medical Center)  
MRI, CT and PET Scans

Open MRI and Imaging of NE Georgia

Open MRI

(Owned by Northside Hospital-this is not a  
freestanding MRI facility) Hospital outpatient  
Imaging



**Northeast Georgia Medical Center**  
Northeast Georgia Medical Center  
Hospital surgery and ancillary lab/x-ray

# **Know before you go to the ER**

- **Do you know the average cost of an emergency room visit?**
  - **\$1,300**
- **If you are not going to the emergency room for a true, life-threatening illness or serious accidental injury, then you are responsible for the full cost of that emergency room visit until you reach your deductible**
- **What are some things to consider before going to the emergency room?**
  - **Seeking care as early as possible to assure more options are available**
  - **Call the nurseline first to “triage” your injury or illness first**



# THE COST OF HEALTH CARE: SOUTH ATLANTIC REGION

IF IT ONLY COSTS \$20 TO SEE THE DOCTOR WHEN YOU HAVE A SORE THROAT, WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL? IF YOU KNEW THE TRUE COST OF SERVICES, YOU MIGHT THINK TWICE BEFORE VISITING THE DOCTOR. SOME OF THE AVERAGE COSTS FOR HEALTH CARE SERVICES IN THE SOUTH ATLANTIC REGION OF THE UNITED STATES ARE AS FOLLOWS.

AVERAGE ALLOWABLE COST (AMOUNT THE HEALTH PLAN AND EMPLOYEE COSTS ARE BASED ON)

## Physician Services

Primary care physician visit

\$141.83

Specialist visit

\$210.90

Routine exam visit -21 + years

\$142.80

Well-baby visit- 0-2 years

\$294.81

Obstetrical care (vaginal delivery) – 21-45 years

\$3,011.73



<b>Hospital Services</b>	
Inpatient admission – 21+ years	\$29,051.0
Maternity (regular delivery) – 21-45 years	\$12,117.91
Maternity (C-section) – 21-45 years	\$16,879.48
Outpatient surgery	\$2,985.00
ER visit	\$1,161.19
<b>Diagnostic Tests</b>	
Mammogram – Women 40-69 years	\$252.41
Colonoscopy – Adults 52-80 years	\$1,005.31
Cardiac stress test – 21+ years	\$289.39
Chest X-ray – 21+ years	\$111.64
MRI – 21+ years	\$1,123.77
CT scan – 21+ years	\$1,169.09
<b>Rx – Retail</b>	
Brand	\$544.98
Generic	\$31.31
<b>Rx – Mail</b>	
Brand	\$2,063.73
Generic	\$65.74