

BE A PROACTIVE HEALTH CONSUMER

Question: It appears I have to take charge of my own healthcare. What suggestions do you have for managing this?

Firstly, have your records together. Keep a file at home of all important documents and test results. This includes MRI reports, lab test, specialist reports, etc.

Have a list of your doctor's phone numbers, e-mail addresses and mailing addresses.

Make a list of everything you take. This includes medications, over-the-counter medicines, herbs and vitamins.

Summarize your health history. This is well worth your time and effort. Taking your history can be complex and time-consuming. Make it easier for your doctor. You may be cut off short otherwise.

List your tests, diagnoses and treatments in chronological order. Summarize very briefly what happened.

For example, "June 15, 2007. Saw Dr. Smith neurosurgeon for herniated disc. Told I was non-surgical."

Know your family history. Does your family have arthritis, scoliosis, cancer, heart disease, diabetes, high blood pressure or kidney disease?

Bring someone along to important doctor visits. If alone, take notes on what the doctor tells you.

What do you hope to learn or gain from this office visit? Write down your 3 most important questions and ask these right away. Don't wait until the doctor is leaving the room.

Make sure you understand what is wrong with you. If possible, get the name of your diagnosis. You can learn more at web sites such as *MayoClinic.com*, *FamilyClinic.org* and *Medlineplus.gov*.

What is your next step? Will there be testing? Will you see a specialist? Will you self-treat or is there a treatment plan?

If testing is advised, how risky is it? What information will be learned? Are there alternative tests?

Whether you like it or not, you must be in charge of your healthcare. And I think that's a good thing. Who cares more about your health than yourself?

Chiropractic is one more tool to help keep you healthy, fit and active. Make a chiropractor a part of your health-care team!

Copyright © 2008 - Konicki Schumacher Chiropractic. All rights reserved.

Dr. Tom Konicki a certified chiropractic orthopedist with his wife Dr. Bethany Schumacher has practiced for 20 years in South Dayton. Contact him at www.kschiro.com or 937-439-5400. Mail questions to Ask the Chiropractor, 2165 Miamisburg-Centerville Road, Dayton, Ohio 45459