



WELLNESS WORKSHEET 106

Choosing a Primary Care Physician

To help evaluate your current physician or choose a new one, fill in the requested information and complete the checklist.

General Information

Physician name: _____ Training/certification: _____

Office location: _____ Hospital privileges: _____

Office phone: _____ Office hours: _____

Does the physician take my current insurance? _____ Is she or he accepting new patients? _____

Is advice available by phone? If so, at what number and at what times? _____

Is advice available by e-mail? If so, at what e-mail address? _____

Who covers for the physician when she or he is unavailable? _____

What should I do if I need care urgently? _____

Yes No

- ___ ___ The office appears to be run efficiently.
- ___ ___ The office atmosphere is friendly and reassuring.
- ___ ___ The office staff is helpful when I call for an appointment or arrive for a visit.
- ___ ___ The wait for a routine appointment is acceptable (typical time: _____).
- ___ ___ Phone calls are returned in a timely manner.
- ___ ___ Privacy is provided when I am asked personal questions.
- ___ ___ The office sends reminders about preventive tests such as Pap tests.
- ___ ___ The physician has expertise or experience treating conditions of concern to me (list: _____).
- ___ ___ The physician seems thorough when taking my medical history.
- ___ ___ The physician gives me enough time to completely describe my problem or concern.
- ___ ___ The physician answers all my questions.
- ___ ___ The physician treats me with respect.
- ___ ___ The physician explains things clearly: I understand my diagnosis, the reason for any tests or treatments, how to use prescribed medications, and so on.
- ___ ___ The physician discusses preventive care and lifestyle changes, such as smoking cessation and regular exercise.
- ___ ___ The physician supports my decision to seek a second opinion when I feel it's necessary.
- ___ ___ The physician refers me to a specialist when indicated.
- ___ ___ Overall, the physician makes me feel comfortable with and confident of the services she or he is providing.

“No” answers may indicate areas where your relationship with a physician or the running of the office may be less than ideal. Discuss any areas of concern with your physician. If things do not improve, consider changing physicians. Remember, your physician works for you.

(over)

INTERNET ACTIVITY

Information about many U.S. physicians and hospitals is available online. Choose a local physician or hospital, and see what information you can find from the following sites. Alternatively, search for a physician with a particular type of specialty practicing in your area.

American Medical Association (Doctor Finder): <http://www.ama-assn.org>

American Board of Medical Specialties: <http://www.abms.org>

Health Grades: <http://www.healthgrades.com>

Joint Commission: <http://www.jointcommission.org>

Public Citizen: <http://www.citizen.org/hrg>

Site(s) visited (URL): _____

Name of physician or hospital: _____

Information obtained:

Next, search for a local clinic, hospital, or physician's office. Do any of the medical facilities in your area sponsor their own Web site? If so, describe the information available at the site.

Clinic, hospital, or medical office: _____

Site visited (URL): _____

Information available: