Getting the Care You Need

A Guide for People with Disabilities

Did you know health care providers are required to offer everyone access to medical services without discrimination on the basis of disability? (CMS



You have the right to access the same medical services as everyone else.

This means providers:

- Shouldn't deny you medical care services because buildings, exam rooms, or equipment aren't accessible.
- Should give you information in a way you understand.



You have the right to reasonable modifications, auxiliary aids, and services.

This means providers must:

- Provide qualified sign language interpreters, assistive listening devices, or materials in braille or large print.
- Allow a service animal into the inpatient and exam rooms. (Here, a service animal means any dog that is trained to do work or perform tasks for a person with a disability.)

Federal laws protect your rights and prohibit discrimination.

This means providers aren't allowed to:

- Refuse to serve you or make you wait longer just because you have a disability.
- Require you to bring someone to help with interpreting, reading, or other types of assistance.
- Charge you extra fees for braille translation or sign language interpretation.



Work with your provider to get the care you need

When you make an appointment, tell the scheduler about your needs for the appointment.

At the start of your appointment, remind staff about your needs. You can ask your provider to make simple changes in the way they interact with you. For example, if you are blind, you may ask your provider to describe what is happening during the exam and give you verbal cues before touching you.

During your appointment, let your provider know about any problems you're experiencing. If you don't feel comfortable doing that, you can let them know in writing or over the phone.



What to do if you experience difficulties

Tell your provider or the office manager about the issues you experienced and discuss what staff can do to meet your needs.

Keep a written or electronic record of your concerns.

If you have Medicare and/or Medicaid coverage and you feel a provider treated you unfairly because of your disability, you may file an anonymous discrimination complaint.



For more information about filing an anonymous discrimination complaint:

Call the HHS Office for Civil Rights toll-free (800) 368-1019 or TDD toll-free (800) 537-7697
Visit: https://ocrportal.hhs.gov/ocr

Mail your complaint to: U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, 200 Independence Avenue, SW, Room 509F, HHH Building, Washington, DC 20201

For information about Medicare bills or claims:

Visit **Medicare.gov** or call **1-800-MEDICARE** (1-800-633-4227). TTY users can call 1-877-486-2048

















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Appointment Checklist for People with Disabilities

Use this checklist to help you get the care you need before, during, and after your appointment.

something that's difficult for you.



steps, or have your family member or support person

When you call to schedule your appointment, tell the scheduler about your needs for the appointment and ask what to expect. This will help you and your provider get ready for the appointment. If the scheduler you talk to isn't located in your provider's office, you can call your provider's office directly to discuss your needs and ask what to expect. If you choose to schedule your appointment online, try to describe what you'll need in the online form or follow up with a phone call. What can I expect during my appointment? How will I get the specific assistance I'll need? For example, "I have trouble moving to an exam table, so I'll need help." Can I schedule extra time for my appointment? How will I access the building, office, exam rooms, bathrooms, scales, and equipment? What options are available for transportation and parking? Before your appointment It's important to come prepared for your appointment. Some things you can do to prepare for your appointment	
	5
It's important to come prepared for your appointment. Some things you can do to prepare for your appointment	
 Write down or record any questions you want to ask your provider. Bring your insurance card, a list of your medications and their dosages, and the contact information for your pharmacy and other providers. Decide how you'll get to your appointment, and make plans with anyone going to the appointment with you. Check the availability of accessible parking. If you're taking public transit, check the route from your stop to the provider's office. Bring a notebook or recorder, or ask a family member or support person to come with you an take notes. 	
During your appointment	
Even when you come prepared, sometimes things don't go according to plan or unexpected problems arise When this happens, it's important to tell someone. Your provider and the office staff may be able to make change so you get the care you need. You may find it helpful to:	
Remind staff of the assistance you requested before your appointment. Ask for any kind of reasonable modification you may need (like recording the appointment or other auxiliary aids and services). Tell someone if you're being asked to do Be direct, honest, and specific when telling your provider about your health concerns. Ask the questions you brought with you. Repeat back what the provider tells you in your ow words to make sure you understand. Write down or record any new information or next	'n

take notes.

	After your appointment		
	Follow up with your provider about any concerns You may want to ask about:	you have that weren't taken care of during your appointment.	
	Getting a visit summary in an accessible format.	If you feel you didn't get fair treatment during your visit because you're a person with a disability, you can speak to the o'c e manager. If you need to take further action and	
	Any next steps or follow-up appointments your provider recommends.	have Medicare or Medicaid coverage, you may file a complair online with the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services (HHS), O'c e for Civil Rights (OCR) by: visiting	t
	How and when to take any new medications.	https://ocrportal.hhs.gov/ocr, calling OCR toll-free (800) 368-1019 (TDD toll-free (800) 537-7697), or mailing your complaint to U.S. Department of Health & Human Services: 200 Independence Avenue, SW, Room 509F, HHH Building Washington, DC 20201	
Υ	our questions		
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	2. Question 2		
	3. Question 3		
Y	our other providers	Your medications	
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