

My doctor likes to know  
how I am  
feeling. @

My health is  
important  
to my  
family



One  
of my  
goals is to  
EXERCISE  
on a daily  
basis.

Empower  
\* yourself  
to be a  
Healthy  
Mom.

Having a  
primary care  
provider who  
knows me  
is Important  
to my  
health.

~~XXXX~~  
I know  
where to  
get urgent  
Care  
in case I  
need it.

I ♥ my  
Health Care  
Team!

Instructor guide

# Empower Yourself to be a **Healthy Mom.**

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The background is a solid purple color. Scattered throughout are various white hand-drawn icons: a DNA double helix, a female symbol, a heart with a grid pattern, a speech bubble, a stethoscope, a pair of tweezers, a smiley face, and several 'X' marks. The text 'Getting health care.' is written in a dark purple, cursive font in the center of the page.

*Getting health care.*

# Getting health care.



## LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

- Understand the importance of staying healthy after having a baby.
- Know the different types of care.
- Know where to go and why, when you're healthy, sick or injured.

## MATERIALS NEEDED:

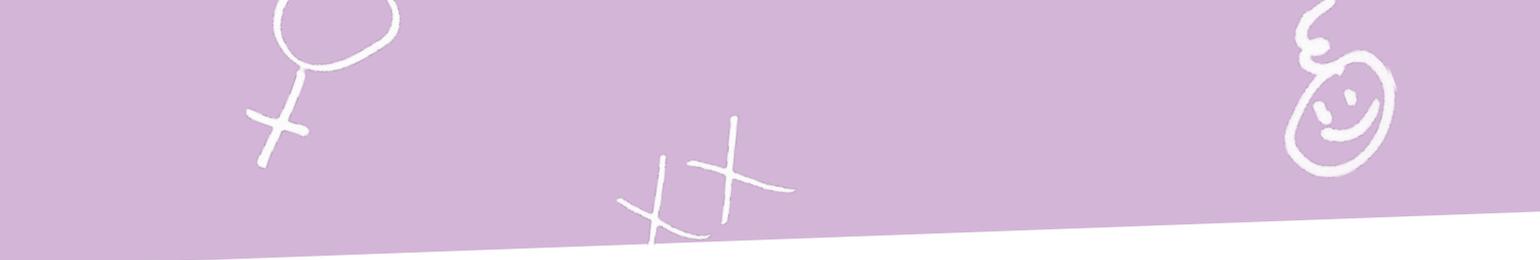
- Handout, "Your health care team."

## WARM UP:

- Where did you go the last time you were sick?

## TALKING POINTS:

- While you were pregnant, you saw the doctor for prenatal care. Your health is just as important now as it was when you were pregnant. Staying healthy helps you to be at your best for taking care of your family.
- You can build a team of professionals or services that can help you stay healthy.
- Let's start with you and your team. (Complete "Your health care team.")
- After birth, you may be eligible to continue Medicaid coverage or enroll in a state or federal health plan. Ask your prenatal care provider or home visitor to help you find out if you are eligible for health care coverage after birth. If you can have insurance, unless you have straight Medicaid, you will need to pick a health plan. You have a choice. Pick a plan that works best for you. If you already have health care providers that you like, find out what health plans they accept so you can decide which plan is best for you.
- If you're not eligible to continue health coverage, there are community clinics available that provide primary care and offer sliding scale fees. (Provide local community clinic options).
- A primary care provider is an important part of your team. He or she is usually a doctor, but can be a physician assistant or a nurse practitioner who sees you for common non-emergency medical problems.
- You should see your primary care provider to keep you healthy, to help you manage medical conditions that don't go away, and get you healthy when you are sick.

- 
- Your primary care provider is often involved in your care for a long time, so it is important to pick someone with whom you feel comfortable with.
  - If you need to pick a primary care provider, consider the answers to the questions listed in the handout.
  - If you have a health plan, the plan can provide you a list of primary care providers that are covered, so you can narrow your options. Use the phone number on the back of your health plan card.
  - Remember to tell your health plan who your chosen primary care provider is.
  - If you don't tell your health plan who you pick as your primary care provider, your health plan will automatically assign you one. You still have a choice. Ask your health plan to change your assigned primary care provider. Use the phone number on the back of your health plan card.

### ACTIVITY:

- Go over handouts with client/patient.
- Complete “Your health care team.” with the client/patient.

### TEACH BACK: LEARN – ASK – DO

- **Learn.** What's one thing you remember or stands out to you?
- **Ask.** What's one question you have for me?
- **Do.** What's one thing you can accomplish after our visit?

*Encourage a client/patient to fill out the “Your health care team.” form located on page two of their handout.*



Meeting a  
new provider.

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

- Know the importance of a new patient visit.
- Know how to prepare for the visit.

## MATERIALS NEEDED:

- Handout, “Things to bring to every visit.” and “How did it go?”

*Note: Some women may already have an established primary care provider and may not need this lesson, but please encourage use of patient portal.*

## WARM UP:

- Do you have a primary care provider, a doctor, nurse practitioner or physician assistant? Are you a new patient to the office? Did you schedule a new patient visit?

## TALKING POINTS:

- Once you choose a primary care provider, if you’re a new patient, it’s important to complete a new patient visit even if you are not sick.
- New patient visits are usually longer appointments that include a discussion about your medical history, your family history of medical problems, medications you are taking, and an exam. Your doctor can take better care of you when you are sick if he or she already knows your medical history.
- Your new patient visit will give you a chance to meet your doctor and decide how you can best work together to keep you healthy. It will also give you a chance to tell her or him what kind of care you hope to receive when you get sick.
- Completing a new patient visit will also allow the clinic to schedule your other visits quickly, especially when you’re sick.
- When you go to your first patient visit, there are a few things you’ll need to bring: picture identification, insurance card(s), a list of your current medications, paperwork the medical office requested for you to complete, and recent information from other doctors. You may also want to think about questions you want to ask your new primary care provider and be ready to talk about the kind of care you hope to have from her or him. This will help your new provider know your expectations.
- Many doctor offices now have online patient portals that you can use to track your health and see your medical record through your phone or computer. At your new patient visit, ask if there is an online patient portal or electronic medical record that you can use and how to sign up for it.



# Meeting a new provider.

## ACTIVITY:

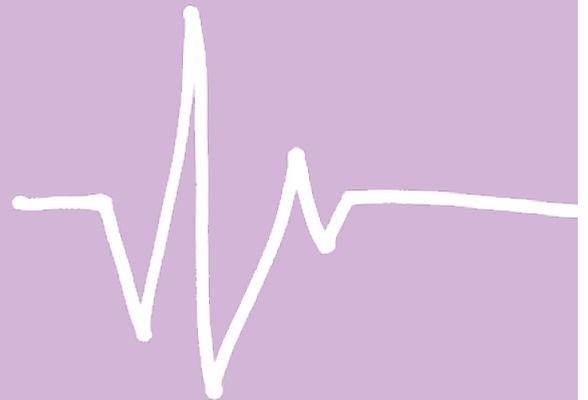
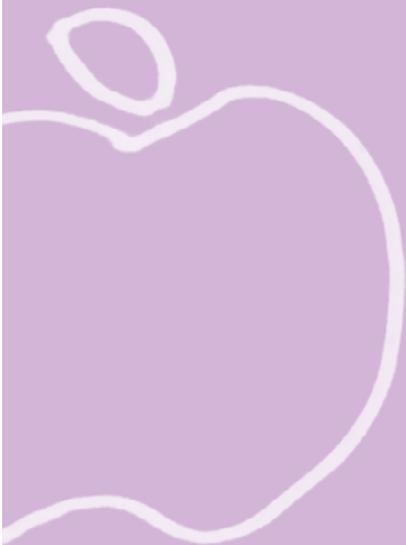
- Go over handouts with client/patient.
- Help her schedule a new patient visit.
- Help her take pictures of medication with phone if applicable.
- Help client/patient identify questions she may want to ask the doctor.
- Help client/patient identify what she may want to tell the provider about the type of care she hopes to receive.

## TEACH BACK: LEARN - ASK - DO

- **Learn.** What's one thing you remember or stands out to you?
- **Ask.** What's one question you have for me?
- **Do.** What's one thing you can accomplish after our visit?



How to talk  
to your provider.



# How to talk to your provider.



## LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

- Know how to prepare for a primary care visit.
- Know how a visit goes.
- Know how to ask and answer questions; get information.

## MATERIALS NEEDED:

- Handout, “How to talk to your provider.”

## WARM UP:

- Do you have a favorite provider and why?

## TALKING POINTS:

- You may go to a primary care provider for an illness, to help manage a chronic disease, or for a well woman check-up. The visits are different, but your provider will need similar information to help him or her understand your health issue.
- Understanding the common questions providers ask may help you give your provider important information for your health care.
- Providers often prefer to hear about your health issue in your own words. You can give them more information than what may be in your medical record, your story. This is often why you find yourself repeating information especially when there is more than one provider taking care of you.
- If you know what information your provider needs and what steps to take at the end of your visit, it can help make the visit more meaningful for both of you.
- At the beginning of your visit, primary care providers will want to know the main reason you are seeing them, and a list of all other issues or questions you want to discuss. You may need to decide together if there is enough time to address everything.



- Next, your provider will want to know what is wrong in your own words—that is “your story” and other specific information. Your provider will want to know:
  - 1) How you are physically feeling or how your body is feeling, and more specific information such as:
    - o When did it start? What day/week?
    - o How long does it last?
    - o Do symptoms come and go?
    - o How often does it happen and when?
    - o What makes it better?
    - o What makes it worse?
    - o What does it feel like?
    - o How bad is it?
    - o Where is it? Does the pain move around?
  - 2) What’s going on in your life that could be causing it?
  - 3) How is it impacting you emotionally or mentally?

For example, if you went to your provider to talk to them about headaches, your provider would want to know:

- 1) How you are physically feeling or how your body is feeling.

*“I have terrible headaches.”*

- o When did it start? What day/week?

*“It started last month.”*

- o How long does it last?

*“It lasts several hours a day.”*

- o Do they come and go?

*“My headache pain comes and goes.”*

# How to talk to your provider.



- o How often does it happen and when?

*"I have headaches every day in the afternoon."*

- o What makes it better?

*"I usually feel better after I sleep."*

- o What makes it worse?

*"I feel worse with flashing light and loud noises."*

- o What does it feel like?

*"It's a throbbing pain.  
Sometimes it's a sharp pain."*

- o How bad is it?

*"On a scale of 0 to 10, it's a five. It's hard  
to ignore and think about things other  
than my pain."*

- o Where is it? Does the pain move around?

*"The pain is on top of my head all the  
way down to the back of my neck."*

- 2) What do you think may be causing it? Is there something going on in your life that may be causing it?

*"I just changed jobs and my sleep schedule is  
all thrown off. My headaches may be because  
I'm not getting enough sleep."*

- 3) How is it making you feel emotionally/mentally:

*"The headaches make me feel so grumpy that  
I can't stand to be around my family!"*

- Your provider may then complete a short or full physical exam as necessary.



- After your exam, your provider will discuss what the issue might be and treatment options with you. If not, you have every right to ask. Ask what the issue is and about possible treatment options.
- At the end of your visit, your primary care provider may give you a brief summary of what you both discussed or ask you to give a summary. This is to make sure you are both on the same page. If this doesn't happen, you can start the conversation with your doctor to make sure he or she is on the same page as you.

Repeat back to the provider what was decided between you, the ACTION PLAN:

- 1) This is what I understand is the problem:
  - 2) This is what I don't understand:
  - 3) My treatment options are:
  - 4) To help me feel better, we decided I will:
  - 5) I should expect to feel better in:
  - 6) I should come back if or when:
- Also, don't forget to ask when you can talk about the other issues you wanted to cover if you didn't have enough time during the visit.
  - If you find that you are not on the same page with your provider most of the time, bring your concerns up directly with your provider. Be as specific as you can be. Ask how these concerns can be resolved. If you feel your concerns are not resolved, then identify a patient advocate, clinic manager, or other staff member that can help you. If you are not happy with your provider's or agency's response, you have choices. You can change your primary care provider.

## ACTIVITY:

- Role-play a visit (with a patient who is having a bad headache or something similar). Have the mom practice telling you "her story" and giving a "medical history" and make sure you are both on same page at the end of the visit.
- Encourage client/patient to practice this for her next doctor's visit.

## TEACH BACK: LEARN - ASK - DO

- **Learn.** What's one thing you remember or stands out to you?
- **Ask.** What's one question you have for me?
- **Do.** What's one thing you can accomplish after our visit?



*Where to go  
if the office is closed.*

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

- Know the different types of care.
- Know where to go and why, when you're healthy, sick or injured.

## MATERIALS NEEDED:

- Handout, "Where to go if doctor's office is closed."

## WARM UP:

- If your doctor's office is closed and you need care, what would you do?

## TALKING POINTS:

- When your primary care provider is closed, you have options for care that could save you time and money. Ask where you should go or what to do if you are sick when the office is closed. Your provider may give you a list of places.
- If you are unsure, and it's not life threatening, try calling your primary care office even if it is closed. Many offices have staff on call to help you decide what to do and where to go.
- If you do go to urgent care or another care option, tell your primary care provider. It's important your doctor knows you are sick and what care was provided, so they can follow-up if needed.
- You can use your online patient portal, electronic medical record, or leave a phone message with your primary care provider's nurse to tell your provider you used another care option, how you are feeling, and ask if you need follow-up care.

## ACTIVITY:

- Go over handouts with client/patient.

## TEACH BACK: LEARN - ASK - DO

- **Learn.** What's one thing you remember or stands out to you?
- **Ask.** What's one question you have for me?
- **Do.** What's one thing you can accomplish after our visit?

This publication was developed by Michigan State University College of Human Medicine, Department of Obstetrics, Gynecology, Reproductive Biology and Michigan State University Extension in collaboration with Strong Beginnings Federal Healthy Start Program, Spectrum Health, Priority Health, Arbor Circle, Cherry Health, Kent County Health Department, Michigan Department of Health and Human Services and other community partners as part of an Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality community demonstration and research project.

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