

# Our Appointment Guide



Seeking advice from a therapist, counsellor or mental health professional is always the best choice to start tackling your issues. No matter the severity of the problem, talking and getting sound advice from these professionals can help navigate through the challenges. They can teach you how to process information and direct your thoughts in manners that are more conducive to a healthier state of mind.

Alternatively, one can seek the help of a psychiatrist. Psychiatrists prescribe medication. However, such medical treatments used to resolve your mental health issues should always be the last port of call, before exhausting all other available options. If, however, you do choose to pursue this option and thus see a psychiatrist it is important to be prepared.

Below you will find an attachment that you can print, where you can prepare a list of questions of what to expect from a given medication, associated risks, the duration of the treatment and many other such queries.

## What to prepare before your appointment & what should I say?

When you see your psychiatrist be as open and honest as possible about what is going on with you. One way to help get the most out the consultation is to ask questions. Asking questions can help you understand what you are going through and what support is available.

## ASK QUESTIONS

Any question is okay to ask, but here are four questions that may be especially helpful to ask.

### Can you help me to understand what is going on?

Knowing what is happening can be a relief and the first step towards feeling better.

### What are the risks entailed?

Talk through the pros and cons for each option decide together with your psychiatrist. This may include taking about all the side effects of medications, the risks, and costs of different options.

### What are my options?

Knowing your options can help you to understand the range of actions and treatments that are available so that you can make an informed decision.

### When will I feel better?

Often just having the first conversation about your mental health can help you to feel better, but is important to know when your planned treatment is likely to start working. This will help you to know what to expect, the associated risks and also when to go back to your psychiatrist if the treatment isn't working.

# QUESTIONS

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**Can you help me to understand what is going on?**

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**What are my options?**

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**What are the risks entailed?**

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**When will I feel better?**

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Furthermore, if medication is prescribed, be sure to ask:

What are the side effects and associated risks?  
How long will I have to take these for?