



Understanding Communication: What is Your Style?

Talking to your healthcare provider may be difficult. Review each statement and check which sounds most like you during an appointment with your healthcare team.

Good communication with your healthcare provider involves sharing your goals, concerns, and asking questions. It also involves listening to your healthcare professional. This will help build respect, trust, and open communication between you and your healthcare team.

- 1 I say “yes” to everything my healthcare provider says, even when I may not agree.
- 2 I often talk over or interrupt my healthcare provider, even when he or she is discussing something important.
- 3 I can share my goals, concerns, and ask questions about my lung disease.

Ways to Improve Your Communication

Assertive communication is the ability to express positive and negative feelings openly and honestly, while also respecting the feelings of others.

Here are some tips to get started:

- Use “I” or “me” statements. Try, “I know you want to help me feel better. I would also like to explore other treatment options.”
- Ask for a further explanation. If you do not understand what your healthcare provider is saying, ask a follow-up question. Try, “can you explain how this new medication is different than the medicine I currently take?”
- Repeat what you hear back to your doctor. Try, “so what you are saying is _____, because _____?”

Practice Using Assertive Communication

Using assertive communication may be hard, but it can be practiced. Over time it will be easier to use during conversations.

- 1 Rephrase this sentence using “I” statements. “You don’t ever answer my questions about treatment goals.”

- 2 Rewrite this sentence as a question to get more information from your healthcare provider. Your healthcare provider says that “you need a pulmonary function test to monitor the progression of your lung disease”.

- 3 Rephrase this sentence by repeating back what your healthcare provider is saying. Your healthcare provider tells you “you need to start using supplemental oxygen at night”.

Preparing for Your Next Healthcare Appointment

- **For more resources** like the COPD Action Plan or Asthma Action Plan, Staying Active with Lung Disease, and Getting Ready for Your Next Visit go to the [Patient & Caregiver Network Lung Disease Management Tools Library](#).
- **Make a list of questions** for your healthcare provider. Need help getting started? Visit the lung disease lookup section on [Lung.org](#) for “questions to ask your doctor.”