



First Nations Health Authority  
Health through wellness

# YOUR DOCTOR AND YOU

[www.fnha.ca](http://www.fnha.ca)

1.866.913.0033

## Why should I have a family doctor?

### Family doctors can:

- Help you when you are sick. They can also help you stay healthy.
  - Have a relationship with you which can help them know just what to do.
  - Treat your family which helps them develop a better understanding of you and your world.
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- Refer you to a specialist and tell you about community resources available.
  - Coordinate your care across different services and with other health care professionals.
  - Help you and your family understand more about healthy living.
  - Help support you when you are in crisis.

## Your health care professional should:

- Respect your rights as a Canadian citizen and as a First Nations person.
  - Treat you fairly and with dignity and respect.
  - Tell you a name and job title.
  - Explain your illness, treatment, and any necessary tests.
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- Keep your file and personal information private and confidential.

## Before your appointment:

- Write out all your health concerns.
  - Write out all your symptoms and how long you have had them.
  - Write out what makes you feel better or worse.
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- Write out all the medications, including traditional medicines, that you are currently using on a piece of paper. This may take a while because you need to make sure to include the name of the medication, the dose (examples: 50 mg., 20 mcg., etc.) and how often you take the medication (examples: once a day, at bedtime, etc.).

## During your visit:

- Have someone with you for support if you are uncomfortable or if you need help keeping track of information.
- Present your list of health-related concerns/questions. (see Before Your Appointment)
- Advise if you are on any medication and/or treatments, including traditional or alternative treatments or medications.

- Ask about resources and service that may be available to you.
  - Stop the examination or treatment if at any time you feel uncomfortable.
  - Ask your doctor to contact you with the results of any tests that are ordered.
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- Review your list of questions or concerns to ensure they have been answered to your satisfaction.
  - Take a moment to repeat any follow up care instructions to the health care professional to ensure you both understand.
  - If you have run out of time, request a follow- up appointment.
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### **Voice your concern**

You know yourself better than any Health Care Professional – trust your “gut instinct”.

If you feel that you or your family did not receive adequate health care services, or your rights were not respected, there are steps you can take to voice your concerns or if necessary, to file a complaint.

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### **Steps you can take:**

#### **1.** Communicate clearly and firmly:

- I feel that I was not provided with proper health service because...
  - I feel that my concerns are not being addressed because...
  - I feel uncomfortable when...
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#### **2.** Ask for clarification to avoid misunderstanding.

#### **3.** For support, contact your Community Health Worker or Representative.

#### **4.** If you feel you had inadequate treatment or care, or experienced inappropriate or unprofessional conduct, you can file a complaint with the appropriate Health

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Care Professionals Association or College, such as the College of Physicians and Surgeons of BC. **Toll-free 1-800-461-3008.**

#### **5.** If your complaint or concern is regarding a hospital, public health, or provincially funded health professional, call your local Health Authority about the complaint process.

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#### **6.** Learn the steps to file a complaint, and expect to send written documentation to appropriate organization.

#### **7.** If necessary, get an health advocate to act on your behalf.

#### **8.** If necessary and if possible, get a new healthcare professional.