

How to Pick the Right Primary Care Doctor for YOU

Choosing the right doctor is more than finding someone who takes your insurance. It's about building trust, feeling safe, and being heard. Below are 10 essential things to look for when evaluating a primary care provider. Review them carefully, and use the second page to reflect on your own experience.



3. Is Their Office Staff Friendly and Efficient?

Your overall care experience includes the front desk. Are they respectful, timely, and helpful? A chaotic or rude staff can make even the best doctor difficult to access.

4. Are They Personable and Approachable?

Do they make eye contact, smile, and speak with warmth? A personable doctor helps you feel comfortable. You should feel safe being vulnerable and asking questions without fear or judgment.

5. Do They Include You in Your Care Decisions?

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2. Do They Ask Thoughtful, Probing Questions?

An excellent provider doesn't stop at surface-level symptoms. They dig deeper to get the full picture. They ask about your history, lifestyle, and emotional well-being to understand your care holistically.

6. Can You Comfortably Discuss Sensitive Topics?

Your doctor should make you feel comfortable discussing anything—including mental health, trauma, sexual health, and personal fears. There should be no judgment—just compassion and confidentiality.

7. Are They Culturally Sensitive and Inclusive?

You deserve a doctor who honors your identity, culture, and beliefs. They ask respectful questions, avoid stereotypes, and offer care that aligns with your values and lived experiences.

8. Do They Follow Up Without You Chasing Them?

A responsible doctor ensures you aren't left in the dark. They or their staff follow up about lab results, referrals, and medication changes without you having to chase them down.

9. Do You Leave Feeling Empowered—Not Rushed?

The best doctors leave you feeling confident and clear about your next steps. You should feel like your time was respected—not like you were squeezed into a 5-minute slot.

10. Do They Explain Medical Terms in a way you can understand?

A good doctor doesn't speak in medical code—they break things down in everyday language. You shouldn't need a dictionary to understand your diagnosis or next steps. If you leave appointments confused, it's a sign they're not communicating clearly or respectfully.

Reflection Sheet

Use this sheet to write down your personal notes after visiting a new doctor.

Did They Truly Listen—or Just Wait to Speak?

Did They Ask Thoughtful, Probing Questions?

Are They Personable and Approachable?

Do They Include You in Your Care Decisions?

Can You Comfortably Discuss Sensitive Topics?

Are They Culturally Sensitive and Inclusive?

Do They Follow Up Without You Chasing Them?

Is Their Office Staff Friendly and Efficient?

Do They Explain Medical Terms in Plain Language?

Do You Leave Feeling Empowered—Not Rushed?



THE POWER OF ADVOCACY

Use Your Voice

by: *D Nichole French*

Advocating for yourself isn't just a skill—it's a lifeline. As a breast cancer survivor, I've learned firsthand the importance of speaking up for what you need, especially when navigating life's most challenging moments. Whether it's in a doctor's office, at work, or even within your personal relationships, self-advocacy is a powerful way to ensure your voice is heard and your needs are met.

For many of us, the idea of advocating for ourselves can feel uncomfortable. We're taught to be polite, to not make waves, and to accept what we're given. But when it comes to your health, your dreams, or your rights, staying silent can come at a cost. I discovered this the hard way when I faced my own cancer diagnosis. There were moments when I felt dismissed, unheard, and overwhelmed. But in those moments, I realized that no one knows my body, my needs, or my goals better than I do. That's when I found my voice.

Why Self-Advocacy Matters

Advocating for yourself means taking an active role in your own life. It's about standing up for your values, asking for what you need, and holding people accountable when they fall short. This isn't about being combative; it's about being empowered.

When you advocate for yourself:

1. You gain control. It's easy to feel powerless in certain situations, but advocating for yourself puts you back in the driver's seat.
2. You build confidence. The more you stand up for yourself, the more you realize your voice matters.
3. You set boundaries. Advocating helps you communicate your limits and expectations, which is key to maintaining healthy relationships.
4. You inspire others. When people see you speaking up, it encourages them to do the same.

Self-advocacy is a skill you can develop, and it starts with small steps:

- Be informed. Knowledge is power. Whether it's understanding your health condition, knowing your workplace rights, or researching options, the more informed you are, the stronger your voice will be.
- Ask questions. Never hesitate to ask for clarification or additional information. This shows you're engaged and ensures you understand what's being discussed.
- Practice assertiveness. There's a difference between being assertive and aggressive. Speak calmly and confidently, and use "I" statements to express your needs (e.g., "I need more information before I make a decision").
- Bring support. If you're in a challenging situation, like a medical appointment, bring a trusted friend or family member who can help advocate alongside you.
- Know your worth. Remind yourself that your concerns and needs are valid. You deserve to be heard.



One of the reasons I founded RePURSEpose Inc. is because I believe in the power of advocacy. Our nonprofit exists to provide women defeating cancer with resources, support, and encouragement to help them find their voices. Whether it's navigating a medical system, seeking emotional support, or addressing financial challenges, we empower women to stand up and say, "This is what I need."

I know what it feels like to be overwhelmed and scared. I also know what it feels like to step into your power and demand better for yourself. That's why I've made it my mission to teach women how to advocate for themselves—not just in their cancer journeys, but in every area of their lives.

**YOUR VOICE,
YOUR SUPERPOWER**

**MY PERSONAL
MISSION**

Advocating for yourself isn't easy, and it won't always lead to the outcome you hope for. But every time you stand up for yourself, you reinforce an important truth: You matter. Your voice matters. Your needs matter. So don't wait for someone else to speak up for you. Be bold, be brave, and take charge of your life. When you advocate for yourself, you don't just change your circumstances—you inspire others to find their voices too. Together, we can create a world where everyone's voice is heard.