

## Questions to Ask Your Doctor about Your GI Condition

*Original Source: <http://www.gichannel.com/patient-information-gi/index.shtml>*

Here are questions to ask your medical team when you have stomach problems or conditions of the gastrointestinal (GI) tract or digestive system. Don't be shy about speaking with your doctor and medical team because asking the right questions can help you manage your condition and improve your outcome.

Many digestive disorders are common conditions that may require prompt diagnosis and treatment. The more knowledge you have about your GI condition, the easier it is to make decisions about your treatment.

**Print this page**, check off the questions you would like answered, and give it to your doctor, physician's assistant (PA), nurse, or other member of your health care team.

### Questions to ask about your GI condition

- What is the name of my condition? Are there any other names for it? (For example, gastroesophageal reflux disease [GERD] is also known as chronic heartburn.)
- How severe is my condition?
- Is my condition long-lasting (i.e., chronic)? Is it hereditary or related to my environment or lifestyle?
- What complications may I experience?
- Does my condition increase my risk for developing any other medical problems?

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### Questions to ask about diagnostic tests

- Will a board-certified gastroenterologist (specialist in diseases of the GI tract) be performing my diagnostic test?
- If not board certified, has my doctor completed a fellowship program or received special training in gastroenterology?
- About how many of these procedures has my doctor performed? About how many does he/she perform each month?
- How should I prepare for this diagnostic test?
- How long will the test take?
- Will I be able to drive myself home immediately following the test?
- Are there any side effects or complications associated with this diagnostic test?
- If my test detects an abnormality, what will be the course of action? May abnormal tissue be removed during the procedure?

- How long will it take to get the results of the test? Should I call for the results, or will someone contact me?

**Telephone # to call:**

**When to call:** Date:

Time:

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### Questions to ask about your treatment

- Is there a cure for my condition?
- What are my treatment options? What type of treatment do you recommend?
- What are the potential benefits and drawbacks of this treatment?
- What are the common side effects of the recommended treatment?
- What should I do if I experience **severe side effects**?  
**Telephone # to call:**
- Should I take any over-the-counter medications (e.g., antacids, aspirin) during treatment? Over-the-counter medications to **avoid**:
- How long should it take for the treatment to work?
- What types of lifestyle and dietary changes may be helpful to manage my condition during and after treatment?
- Should I schedule appointments with a nutritionist, dietician, or other health care specialists?
- How often should I be seen for follow-up appointments?
- Next appointment:** Date:                      Time:
- Are there any clinical trials available for my condition?
- Can you recommend a local or online support group to me?

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### Notes/Additional Information:

- Where can I **read more** about my condition?
- Other: