

+ Tips to Thrive

Empowering Yourself Through Self-Advocacy

Advocating for yourself or your loved one is vital when you have a chronic health condition. Becoming more involved in your medical care can promote stability, build confidence, improve your quality of life, and ultimately, provide a feeling of control. While you feed your body with enteral and parenteral nutrition, take time to feed your mind, your voice, and your soul by practicing some self-care.

Feed your mind. Take a proactive approach by educating yourself about your medical condition, medications, and healthcare coverage. Consider learning more about:

- + Your condition by searching for information from reputable sources.
- + Line and tube care from experts.
- + Which medical situations are urgent and how to respond.
- + Insurance coverage and out-of-pocket expenses.
- + The specifics of your medications, treatments, and therapies, including why it is being prescribed and any potential risks.

Feed your voice. Establish a positive relationship with your team through communication and negotiation rather than confrontation. You have a right to be part of your care team and involved in the treatment plan.

At doctor visits:

- + Come prepared to share your list of questions, journal of symptoms, and issues of importance.
- + Review current medications with your healthcare provider and pharmacist (including supplements).
- + Review test results and get an explanation of what they mean.
- + Take notes and ask questions. If you don't understand, ask again.
- + Bring and use evidence-based information to discuss options.
- + Bring a friend or family member for support.

At the hospital:

- + Prepare a list of questions and concerns to discuss with your provider each day.
- + Share a summary of your medical information, medications, and schedules.
- + Share a written copy of your line-care protocol to be followed.
- + Observe anyone who accesses your line to ensure they are following proper line-care technique.
- + If you have concerns about quality of care, share this with a charge nurse or appropriate team member.

At home:

- + Identify family and friends who will be a supportive part of your team.
- + Share your needs and concerns with your home team members.
- + Convey home protocol to any visiting caregivers.
- + Create a list of providers for caregivers in case of emergency.

Feed your spirit. Take the time to find things you enjoy doing and make you happy. Take time for yourself outside of your health issues. Examples include:

- + Yoga, meditation, and other relaxation techniques can help with daily stress.
- + Connect with others who have similar health challenges.
- + Hobbies or special interests. These can serve as a diversion and give you a mental break.
- + Helping others. This allows you to make connections and provides a sense of purpose.



Learn how ThriveRx can help you.

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