

## **1. Your Doctor wants to give you more time**

Over the years surgeries have tried to increase the average time allocated to each patient. Your Doctor will try to give you the time you need. This may mean other appointments run late. You can book longer appointments if you feel this is necessary. Obviously these are limited, so talk to the receptionist.

## **2. Your Doctor hates lists**

This does not mean you should not come to your appointment prepared with the questions you want to ask, but don't bring 5 issues to a 10 minute appointment. Prioritise.

## **3. If you are 10 minutes late you have missed your appointment**

Your slot will have gone and the Doctor will have moved onto the next patient. If you are given another slot, it is not so much the Doctor as the other patients you will impact on.

## **4. Your Doctor is not telepathic**

It's important to be upfront about your main concern. Don't leave the most important thing until you are getting up to go, eg 'Doctor can I just mention these chest pains I've been getting?'

## **5. Your Doctor is a specialist**

Yes a 'specialist in being a generalist.' GPs are very well trained and more experienced than most Doctors you would see in A&E. If, however, you do think that you need to see a specialist, talk to your Doctor about it.

## **6. Your Doctor is self employed**

GP Partners own the business and are 'independent contractors to the NHS.' Staff are employed by the practice not the NHS.

So, what does this mean?

- Your GP gets the same money for you whatever services you use, on average £140 per patient per year. This money includes payment of all practice staff.
- Your GP is only contracted to give you medical care and ensure that you receive it in a safe environment. If you require extra services these may have to be paid for. You may also question whether you should be asking your Doctor to do them.
- Drugs costs come from a separate source, so your Doctor does not benefit from prescribing you a cheaper drug. If cheaper drugs are prescribed, this will save the NHS money, but this will not happen unless your Doctor believes you will derive the same benefits.

## **7. Your Doctor wants the best for you**

If your GP does not offer you any treatment it means that, in their professional opinion, you don't need it. Talk this through with your Doctor before you leave.

## **8. Your Doctor is not taking part in a medical drama**

Real medicine is not like TV, it takes time to make an accurate diagnosis. Many conditions have similar initial symptoms. You could ask your Doctor what symptoms to look out for, and if and when you should return for a review.

## **9. Your Doctor may play golf, but probably not at lunchtime**

Most GPs work long days, seeing up to 40 patients over morning and evening surgeries. They fit in home visits, meetings and essential follow up work in the time in between.

## **10. Your Doctor has entrusted their reception staff with an important job**

They deal with enquiries, book appointments and try to ensure the practice runs smoothly. Talk to them, they must keep your information confidential. They may not be medically trained, but they have a really good understanding of the services on offer at your practice. Even if you are feeling stressed, try to talk to them calmly and explain your problems. They will know how to refer you to the right professional to help you.

*(Taken from the article of the same name by Dr. Johnathan Griffiths.  
Dr Griffiths is a GP in Winsford)*

**KENMORE MEDICAL CENTRE**

## **10 Insider Tips I Bet You Didn't Know About Your GP**

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