

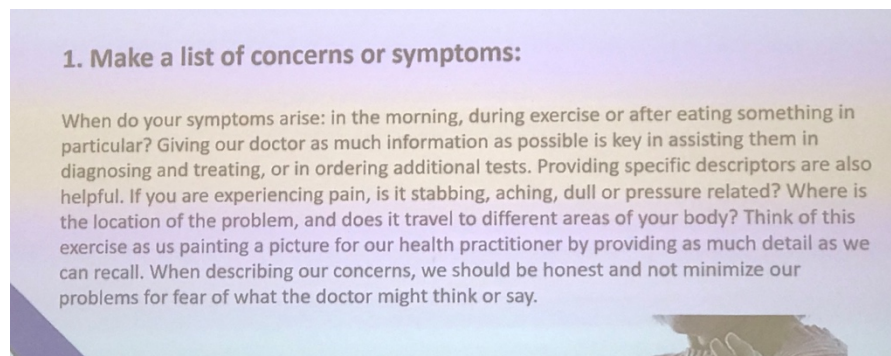
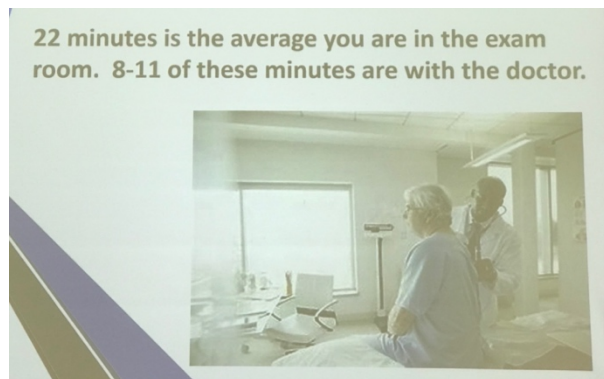
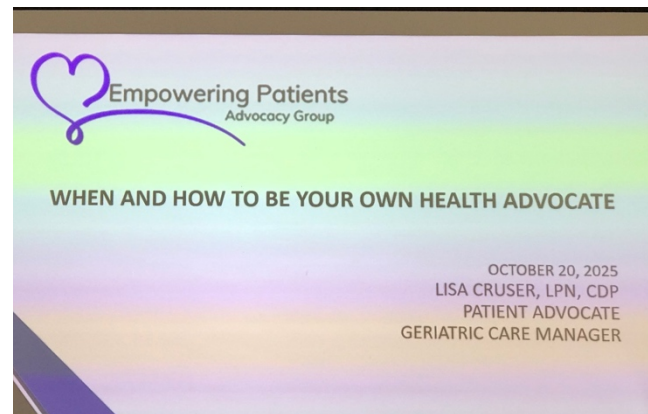
Speaker: Lisa Crusier, LPN
Topic: “Empowering Patients”



Seniors have unique healthcare needs that can be challenging to manage. Lisa Crusier will discuss ways to empower ourselves to be our own Healthcare Advocate. She will also explore when and how to ask for a second opinion.

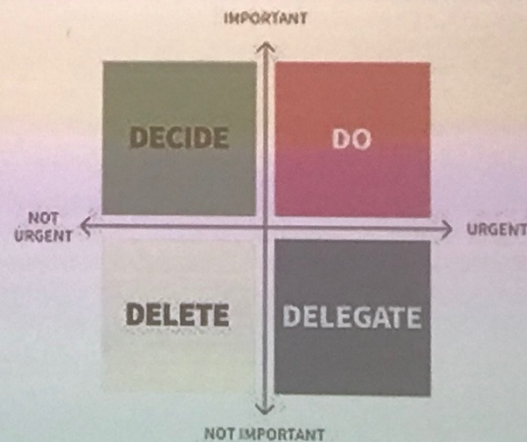
Lisa has spent decades in the healthcare industry. She has amassed broad experience across several disciplines, including cardiology and clinical research. Her work on geriatrics has allowed her to form lasting connections with patients. Lisa is a dedicated nurse, patient advocate, and community leader.

Photo credits: Lisa Crusier, Patrish Shalestik



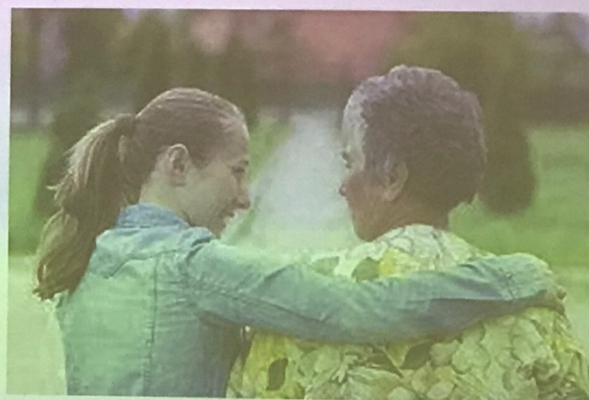
2. Prioritize your visit:

We may want to consider making a list of questions before our visit so that we can stay on track during our appointment. We will most likely have a lot to squeeze into limited time, so we should stick to our list to ensure we get our questions answered. Typically, three or four questions will help drive the experience and improve the outcomes of our visit. Whether it's obtaining a specialist referral, ordering blood work or other tests or looking for a diagnosis, helping our doctor by being prepared can improve the visit for everyone involved.



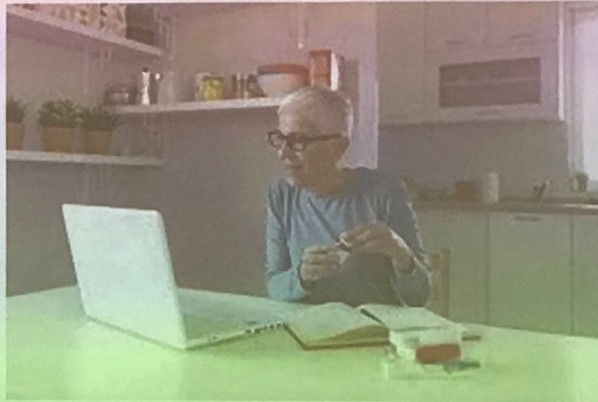
3. Take Someone With You:

Whether it's because our hearing and memory aren't as good as they used to be or because we just need moral support, we should remember that it can be important to ask for assistance. Having a spouse, family member or close friend with us in the exam room allows them to both convey additional information to the doctor as well as keep track of what the doctor may have told us. If we are seeing a doctor because something is wrong, having someone there with us can help to calm any anxiety we may feel.



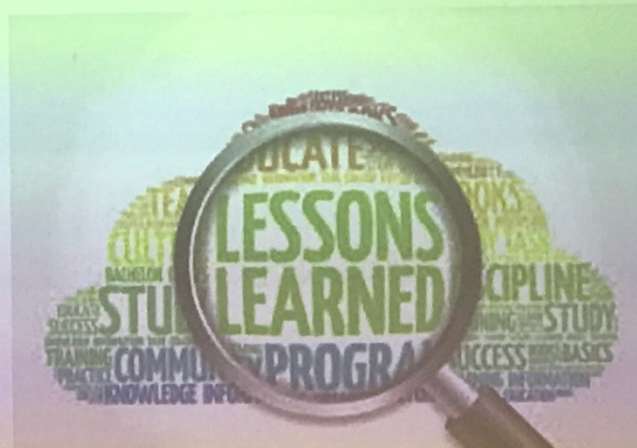
4. Take Time to Review Medication:

Every visit with our health care practitioner needs to include a review of all the current medications we are taking. Oftentimes a prescription ordered at one point in time for a certain issue does not need to be used continuously throughout our life. This is especially true for older adults. As we age, our organs age too, and certain medications may be more harmful than beneficial. We should talk to our doctor to review what is necessary and obtain written directions as well as information on side effects and dosing from our pharmacist as well.



5. Summarize your visit:

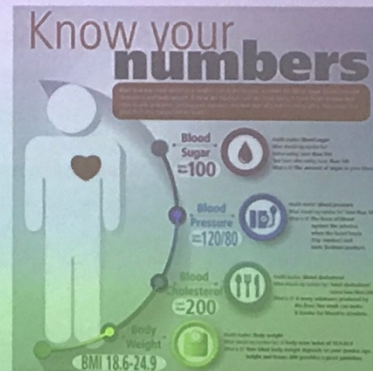
Ask questions! Ask about the validity of the diagnosis. Ask if there are any other possibilities. What about treatments and risks? Are there lifestyle changes that will help? What is your overall prognosis? What other supports or services do you need or will benefit you or your loved ones? Take notes, be proactive, partner with your health care team and develop the tools necessary to make each visit count.



Know Your Numbers!

Here are the four numbers everyone should know.

- Blood Pressure. Your healthy target: 120/80 mm Hg or less
- Blood Cholesterol. Your healthy target: Total blood cholesterol lower than 200 mg/dL
- Fasting Blood Glucose. Your healthy target: 80 to 100 mg/d
- Body Mass Index. Your healthy target: 18.5 to 24.9



2. Get a second opinion if you are diagnosed with a rare disease.

- Sometimes diseases are so rare that there is very little research behind them.
- It can be frustrating and frightening to discover you have been diagnosed with something so rare.
- Approximately 25-30 million Americans have been diagnosed with a rare disease.
- There is so little information available regarding rare diseases and disorders, it is important to do your research, because the risk of misdiagnosis is significant.
- Look for doctors and specialists who have treated your disorder and get their opinion. This will help ensure that you are getting the best treatment possible for your condition.

3. Get a second opinion if the recommended treatment is risky, involves surgery, is invasive or has lifelong consequences.

- It is never wise to agree to surgery or another invasive procedure without exploring your options.
- Some people feel that if a doctor suggests a procedure, they have to agree to it. But remember it is your body and your life.
- You absolutely have a say in what treatments you agree to. As a result, it may be wise to get a second opinion if your doctor is recommending something as serious as surgery.
- Being proactive and gathering more information will give you a greater degree of control over your treatment in the end.

4. Get a second opinion if you are diagnosed with cancer.

- With something as serious as cancer, having the input from another expert simply makes sense.
- Not only can a cancer diagnosis be confusing and overwhelming, but it also is a life-changing event. Therefore, it is important to be as informed as possible about your prognosis and the possible treatment options available to you.
- Keep in mind that no one doctor is completely informed about the findings from every single study and clinical trial in the country. Doctors are only human.
- That's why you need to advocate for yourself. Getting additional opinions just improves the likelihood that you will walk away with the best treatment plan possible.
- What's more, some health insurance providers require a second opinion when it comes to a cancer diagnosis.

October 20,, 2025 General Meeting
Hospitality Table: Center piece by Barbara Rinaldo
Food provided by club members.

