



# Managing Medical Appointments and Navigating NaPro

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## So many pieces

Fertility-related doctor's appointments can be overwhelming and stressful. So much seems to be at stake, outcomes don't always meet our expectations, and follow-up steps may be recommended that end up taxing our emotional and physical resources further. While there's no way to remove all of the strain and complications, there are many things you can do in order to get the most out of these appointments while also minimizing the emotional impact as much as possible.

## Tips for navigating fertility appointments

### ★ 1) Plan a reward

Fertility appointments can be extremely emotionally taxing so plan a reward for after your appointment that will give you something to look forward to and help you to relax/manage your stress. This could include ideas such as a coffee shop break on your own, a date with your spouse, or going for a run.

### ★ 2) Come prepared

- When possible, see if your spouse can attend with you. This will help you to act as a team and will provide important emotional support.
- Keep a notebook specifically for these appointments and spend time beforehand with your spouse, listing the goals you have for the appointment as well as any questions you hope to have answered. Make note of any items from the last appointment that you need to follow up on (bloodwork, results of medication, etc). During the appointment, take notes on all of the doctor's answers, comments and recommendations. Don't trust yourself to remember it later!
- If you are seeing a NaProTechnology doctor, bring your completed Creighton charts and relevant data from your FertilityCare practitioner to your appointment. Create a "chart summary" which lists the data from your FCP.
- Create your own "results chart" with bloodwork and testing results ordered by date. Include on this chart when you started specific medications, what the results were, and when medications were stopped.
- Bring a folder of hard copies of past test results (ie: pelvic ultrasounds).

★ **3) Speak up**

- Remind your doctor of the reason for your current appointment and any items you need to follow up on from your last appointment.
- Don't be afraid to gently correct your doctor if they misremember any information (ie: mixing up hormone levels, suggesting a diagnosis that they previously ruled out, or suggesting a medication that didn't work for you in the past.)
- Ask your doctor to explain the rationale behind recommended testing/treatment.
- Mention any questions or concerns you have regarding recommended testing, medications or treatments.
- Request hard copies of post-operative notes, ultrasound scans, etc for your records.

★ **4) Communicate with your spouse**

- Before your appointment, let your spouse know what kind of support you will need during and after the appointment. For example: "During the appointment, I need you to back me up when I mention my concerns about x"; "I am so stressed after appointments. It would help if you could give me a huge hug and let me know we are in this together and if we can plan something to look forward to next week."
- Try to set aside a half an hour or so directly after the appointment to touch base with your spouse. This could be a debrief over a coffee or a short walk before you each head back to work or the busyness of your day. Ask them how they are feeling and discuss any questions or concerns that either of you have regarding the results or recommendations made during the appointment.

★ **5) Summarize and plan next steps**

- During your debrief with your spouse, jot down any questions or concerns in your notebook before you forget them.
- Once you have more time later on, review the next steps you will need to take, when they need to be completed and who is responsible for each one. For example: "I will go for my bloodwork next Friday. Can you make a note to call this week to schedule your testing?"

## Printable Worksheets

The remaining pages of this resource can be used as templates in your own notes or taken as a guide when setting up documents of your own.

- Appointment planner, appointment notes and appointment debrief: print a number of blank copies of these to keep in your folder and fill out for future consultations.
- Hormone level tracker, testing and medication tracker and chart summary: either print these to keep in your folder and complete by hand, or set up your own versions that can be updated and shared with your medical team at appointments.

# APPOINTMENT PLANNER

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Doctor name \_\_\_\_\_

## **Support**

*The type of support I need from my spouse during & after the appointment is:*

## **Reward**

**Goals** (Remind the doctor of this at the start of your appointment)

*The purpose of today's appointment is to:*

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

## **Updates**

*Since my last appointment, the following has happened that we need to discuss:*

-Cycle concerns

-Bloodwork/tests/ultrasounds/surgeries etc

(Ask "What are the results, how does this affect my treatment plan?" Request a hard copy of ALL results/scans/post-op reports)

-Medication

(Have I experienced side effects? Has medication helped me to achieve desired results (pregnancy, appropriate hormone levels, etc)? If yes/no, how does this affect the next steps in my treatment plan?)

-Mental health:

Other questions/concerns I have for the doctor:

# Appointment notes

## Next steps suggested/requested by doctor

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

## Appointment debrief

### Questions

### Concerns

### “Next steps” action plan

Action	Person responsible	Date to complete	Check off once complete

## RESULTS CHART - HORMONE LEVEL TRACKER

Date of blood test	Cycle day	Progesterone (pmol/L)	Estradiol (pmol/L)	Notes
<i>December 4, 2017</i>	<i>P+7</i>	<i>47.6</i>	<i>480</i>	<i>No medication</i>
<i>January 4, 2017</i>	<i>P+7</i>	<i>55.0</i>	<i>495</i>	<i>On progesterone P+3-P+12</i>

## RESULTS CHART - TESTING AND MEDICATION TRACKER

Date	Name of test/procedure/medication	Notes	Results
<i>October 3, 2017</i>	<i>Progesterone suppositories</i>	<i>To be taken P+3 through P+12, 300mg 1x daily</i>	<i>October - Progesterone levels have increased, spotting still exists</i>
	<i>Vitamin B6</i>	<i>1x daily</i>	<i>Mucus has not increased</i>
<i>November 3, 2017</i>		<i>***STOPPED TAKING VITAMIN B6 AS IT WAS NOT HELPING</i>	
<i>Feb 20, 2018</i>	<i>Pelvic ultrasound</i>		<i>Cysts observed</i>

## CHART SUMMARY

Date of CD1 (Month/Day/ Year)	Cycle length (days)	Pre-peak length (days)	Post-peak length (days)	Mucus cycle length (days)	Mucus cycle score	Mucus cycle strength	Notes
3/15/2016	27	17	10	6	10	Regular	
4/12/2016	33	21	15	4	5	Limited	With taking Vitamin B6