Doctor’s Appointment Checklist:

- **List of questions**: Come prepared with a list of questions to ask your doctor. Brainstorm the list well before the appointment and have a concise list of questions, starting with the ones that are most urgent and must be answered. Don't leave the doctor's office without asking these questions!

- **List of symptoms**: Keep a journal that documents all symptoms and how they fluctuate throughout the days and weeks. Bring this journal to medical appointments to help the doctor better understand what's going on and how the symptoms affect your daily life.

- **Blank paper and a pen for notes**: This may seem obvious, but your doctor may not always have writing equipment readily accessible, and it's important to have a paper and a pen to take notes. Write down things that don't make sense to ask for clarification later. If there are words mentioned that you've never heard of, ask your doctor to spell them.

- **Medical history**: Although it would be ideal for every doctor to have a full list of each patient’s medical history, there is no nationally accessible medical record system in place. Be sure to provide the doctor with key information, including medical problems, past surgeries, doctors’ names, health insurance, and medical allergies.

- **Any changes to your medical record**: Bring any test results since your last visit.

- **Your List of medications** (or a list with doses and frequency): Be as specific as possible about drug and dose. The easiest way to do this is by bringing the actual medication bottles with the labels on them. It's important that patients be honest about their medications and let their doctors know if they've stopped using a drug or have not used it as prescribed. Otherwise, your doctor may wrongly conclude a drug is not working and prescribe more.

- **Forms**: Make sure to complete and bring any requested forms.

- **Previous doctor information**: If referred by another physician, bring the name, address, and telephone number of the doctor.

- **A family member or friend**: Patients need support. And having someone will not only provide company and support, but also may remind you of important questions and concerns.

- **Additional doctor appointment information**: If you have been to another doctor for the same complaint, bring all of the information from that doctor's visit such as test results, x-rays, medication, or treatments prescribed.