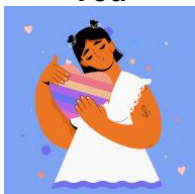




Self-Advocacy in PCOS Care: Strategies to Communicate with Your Health Care Team
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Living with Polycystic Ovary Syndrome (PCOS) means navigating symptoms that affect your reproductive, metabolic, and emotional health. Good PCOS care should address what matters to you. Here are five ways to make sure your voice is heard and your needs are met.

Share What Matters Most to You



- Let your care team know who you are outside of PCOS.
- Set both long term (next few years) and short term (this visit or the next few months) goals for your PCOS care and communicate these to your health care team at the start of each visit.
 - Example: "I'm planning a pregnancy in the next year," or "Managing fatigue is important because I'm caring for young kids."
- This helps your team create a care plan that supports your goals—whether they are related to fertility, mental health, or everyday energy.

Be Honest About Your Concerns



- Write down your top worries before each visit.
- Are you concerned about medication side effects? Weight stigma? Long-term diabetes risk?
- Do you feel you have the support you need at home?
- Bring these up directly so your doctor can respond in a way that matches your priorities.

Come Prepared for Appointments



- Bring a list of your current medications and supplements.
- Keep a symptom log: track cycle patterns, sleep quality, mood changes, or blood sugar readings.
- If you struggle with issues like irregular bleeding, weight gain, or mental health, note when symptoms occur and how they impact daily life.
- Consider bringing a friend or partner for support—they can take notes and help make sure your concerns are heard.

Talk About Challenges in Daily Life



- Share any barriers that affect your ability to follow your care plan:
 - Difficulty accessing healthy food or exercise spaces
 - Transportation issues for appointments
 - Stress balancing PCOS care with work or family responsibilities
 - Anxiety, depression, or feelings of being dismissed by providers
- These details help your care team connect you to resources and adjust your treatment plan.

Tell Your Care Team How You Prefer to Receive Information



- Do you want all the details and statistics, or a short summary with clear action steps?
- Do you want written handouts or a follow-up call to review options?
- Let your care team know what format helps you best absorb and use information.

Key Takeaway: Self-advocacy in PCOS care means making sure your providers understand you—your goals, concerns, and daily challenges. By preparing, speaking up, and asking for information in the way you learn best, you can help shape care that feels respectful, empowering, and effective.