



Taking Charge of Your Health Care

People with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) may struggle to take charge of their health.

They may have trouble communicating with their doctors about their health.

Sometimes family may be scared to talk with them about big health issues that are going on.

Families may decide not to tell people about big health issues because they don't know what to say.

As a result, people with I/DD may feel like they don't have a voice.

People may also feel like they don't know what is going on with their own health.

People who take charge of their health are healthier and happier with their health care.

They ask questions and get answers from their doctors.

They talk with people they trust about their health and learn about what is going on.

They make decisions with people they trust about their health.



HERE ARE THINGS THAT YOU CAN DO TO TAKE CHARGE OF YOUR HEALTH:



Think about how your mind and body feel each day. Talk with people you trust about how you feel when you don't feel well.



Think about questions you want to ask your doctor about your health. Practice what you want to say or ask to your doctors. Write down your thoughts and take your notes to the visit.



Ask the doctor to write down what happened at your appointment and what you should do next. Consider bringing someone you trust with you to your appointments to listen to what is going on.



Ask your doctor about health issues you need to think about in the future. Some health issues don't happen until later on in life. Make sure you know what issues you should look out for.



Find someone you can trust who will calmly listen to you about your health and health care decisions. They can help give you advice on what you should do to be healthier.



Make a plan for what you want to have happen in the future with your health and other parts of your life. Find out more at futureplanning.thearc.org.

