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The following slides were presented during the educational portion of IFFGD's 2020 Virtual Advocacy Event. To view this presentation and the all videos available during this program, please visit https://bit.ly/Adv_Edu.

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How to prepare for seeing your doctor

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Why prepare?

- Time may be limited
 - Clinic appointment length
 - Scheduling lag times
- Diagnostic effort may be wasted
 - Avoid reinventing the wheel
- You are the best person to tell this story
 - Take control of the narrative
 - Aim for a story that is accurate, coherent, and comprehensive

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Elements of preparation

- Know your story
 - Emphasize timeline: “it all started when,” “things got worse when”
 - If symptoms feel vague, practice describing them
 - “Upset stomach” → “cramping upper abdominal pain for about an hour after I eat”
- Know current medications (names and dosages), including OTC drugs
- Know what’s already been done to evaluate this problem
 - Bloodwork
 - Imaging tests
 - Endoscopy/colonoscopy (with biopsy results, if relevant)
 - Other specialized testing

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Elements of preparation

- Know what's already been done to treat this problem
 - What's been prescribed
 - What's been taken
 - At what dosage
 - Did it help?
 - Why was it stopped?
- Know what hasn't been done
 - Medications discussed but not yet tried
 - Testing discussed but not yet performed

Medication	Response (dose, if known)
<i>Prokinetics</i>	
Metoclopramide	
Domperidone	
Bethanechol	
Erythromycin	
Pyridostigmine	
Prucalopride	
<i>Antinauseants</i>	
Ondansetron	
Promethazine	
Prochlorperazine	
Etc. (25 more lines)	

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Records: what do you need to bring?

- When in doubt, bring them
- Even if they're "in the system":
 - Records get lost (or be hidden)
 - Records are often sent and received by non-clinicians
 - Clinicians don't always review records ahead of time

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Records: what do you need to bring?

- More important (objective):
 - Procedure reports
 - Pathology reports
 - Imaging reports
 - Laboratory values
- Less important (relatively):
 - Hospital progress/nursing notes
 - Patient instructions

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Summary

- Beyond time and energy, there's little downside in overpreparing
 - Knowledge is power, even if tests are repeated or some pages go unreviewed
- Confusing clinical stories still benefit from logical frameworks

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