



Medical Gaslighting and Seniors

Patient & Caregiver Advocacy Checklist

Use this checklist to prepare for medical visits and to advocate when concerns are dismissed as “just aging.”

BEFORE THE APPOINTMENT

- Write down **specific symptoms**, when they started, and how they affect daily life
 - Note **what has changed** (new, worsening, or different)
 - Bring an up-to-date **medication and supplement list**
 - Gather recent test results, hospital discharge papers, or visit summaries
 - Decide on the **top 1–2 concerns** that must be addressed
 - Ensure consent forms are signed so family or caregivers can participate
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DURING THE APPOINTMENT

- Describe symptoms clearly and concretely (examples help)
 - Ask: **“What conditions are we ruling out?”**
 - Ask: **“What would you do if this symptom appeared in a younger person?”**
 - Request an explanation if tests or referrals are declined
 - Ask for next steps to be documented in the visit notes
 - Take notes or ask permission to record instructions
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IF YOU FEEL DISMISSED

- Calmly restate the concern:
“I want to be sure we’re not missing something treatable.”
 - Ask:
“If this doesn’t improve, what is the follow-up plan?”
 - Request a referral or second opinion
 - Consider changing providers if dismissal is ongoing
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AFTER THE VISIT

- Review visit notes and test results
 - Follow up in writing if questions remain
 - Track symptom changes and bring updates to the next visit
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REMEMBER

New, worsening, or function-limiting symptoms are **not “just aging.”**

Older adults deserve careful evaluation and respectful listening at every age.

This checklist is for educational purposes only and does not replace medical advice.