

Patient & Provider Role Play (page 1 of 2)

This activity is intended to demonstrate how a patient and provider can actively engage during a health care visit. Using the suggested script below, perform the role play below.

Provider: Hello, Mr. /Mrs. Jones. I understand that you're having some trouble with the CHF we diagnosed two weeks ago. Tell me what's going on.

Patient: Doctor, I know you gave me those pills last time, but sometimes I forget to take them. And I hate this new diet. I miss my potato chips and bacon.

Provider: I can see from looking at your ankles that there is a lot of edema, and your hypertension is getting out of control. Do you understand the importance of a low sodium diet? Maybe you could share with me your understanding of why you are being asked to limit sodium. And, after that, maybe you could tell me why you're being asked to take a diuretic every day and the ramifications of not taking it. I need to be sure that you have a clear understanding of how these things affect your health. We spent a lot of time on this at your last visit.

Patient: I remember; but frankly, I left here and I really didn't understand what a diuretic was. I get that it's the pill I take, but I don't really see the big deal if I sometimes skip it. And by "low sodium," you mean I should lay off the salt, right? I have to tell you, I didn't know what CHF even meant, and had to look it up on the internet when I got home. Heart failure sounds pretty scary!

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Provider: CHF, or Congestive Heart Failure, is a serious disease, but most people can live with it if they follow the treatment plan. Think of it as a new way of living that will help you manage your symptoms and feel better. You're being asked to eat a low sodium (or "low salt") diet and take a pill that helps flush the extra fluid from your body—and to do these things every day.

Patient: Ok. I'm beginning to understand. My heart works too hard which sometimes makes it hard to breathe and my ankles swell from the extra fluid in my body. Eating less salt and taking the pill will help me feel better. I think you also told me to weigh myself and call you if ...

Provider: Call me if you suddenly gain a lot of weight or feel more out of breath than usual. Here is a brochure that will help you to remember the plan and manage your condition. (Handing patient brochure.)

Patient: (Examining brochure.) This looks easy enough. And I do want to feel better. I think I can live with this.

Provider: We'll work together so that you can live with this. Let's have you come back in two weeks and we'll see how things are going now that you better understand your condition and the plan. What additional questions do you have for me? I want to be sure that you've understood everything we talked about.

Patient: (Ticking off on her fingers.) Water pill, less salt, weigh myself. Every day. I think I've got it. Thanks.

Provider: Mr. /Mrs. Jones, I think you do, too. See you in two weeks!