

# DEVELOPING YOUR COMMUNICATION STYLE

There are no right or wrong ways to make decisions and communicate. Thinking about the specific benefits and challenges of different communication styles may help you have more successful appointments. Take the short quiz below to find out your communication style.

Select the answer that is most like your style.

## When I'm communicating with my health care team, I tend to

- A Open up and talk about things
- B Not say much unless I'm asked a question

## When I'm considering treatment options, I tend to

- A Be eager to try different things
- B Hesitate to stray from what I'm used to and change my routine

## When I have a choice to make about my health care, I tend to

- A Take a more active role in the decision-making process
- B Accept and follow what my doctor recommends

## IF YOU ANSWERED MOSTLY

**A** You consider your relationship with your doctor to be a partnership. You want a treatment plan based on your input as well as your doctor's. When you talk to your doctor, it can be challenging for you to cover all you want to talk about. Focus on your most important concerns. This may help you and your doctor find the treatment plan that best fits your needs.

## IF YOU ANSWERED MOSTLY

**B** You consider your doctor to be the expert and may find it challenging to speak up. You are the expert on your needs and preferences, so it's important to share this information. Being up-front about what you want can help you and your doctor make the best decisions about your treatment.

No matter what your communication style is, there are a few things that everyone can do to make talking to the doctor easier:

- **Prepare.** Write down your questions and top concerns before your appointment. That way, you won't forget something you wanted to talk about
- **Speak up.** Be sure to tell your doctor about all of your symptoms and how you've been feeling so he or she understands what's going on with you
- **Ask.** Make sure you ask questions about anything the doctor said that you don't understand