

Ask Me 3[®] and Teach-Back Method



When to use this resource:

Use this resource when you are teaching your patients or their caregivers how to become actively involved in treatment planning by using techniques such as Ask Me 3 and the Teach-Back method.

Ask Me 3

Ask Me 3 is a patient education program that was created to help¹:

- Enhance communication between patients and providers
- Encourage patients to become active participants in their own care
- Gather a better understanding of one's health conditions, and of how to stay healthy

Ask Me 3 encourages patients to ask their provider 3 questions¹:

- What is my main problem?
- What do I need to do?
- Why is it important for me to do this?



Why it's important:

Asking these questions can help patients²:

- Make fewer mistakes in taking medication
- Prepare for medical tests
- Take better care of their health
- Stay well or recover sooner from illnesses

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Ask Me 3[®] and Teach-Back Method (cont.)

The Teach-Back method

It has been shown that patients understand and retain only about half of what they are told.^{3,4} With the Teach-Back method⁴:

- Patients rephrase in their own words the information they were given
- Providers may then evaluate what patients heard and understood and can clarify information as needed

How to use the Teach-Back method

Before using the Teach-Back method, have the patient choose the topic for discussion⁵ (patient-led learning). Follow these teach-back steps⁴:

1. COMMUNICATE—Provider teaches patient new information
2. ASSESS—Provider assesses patient's understanding by asking patient to repeat the new information in their own words
3. CLARIFY—Provider clarifies information
4. REASSESS—Provider checks in again to determine the patient's recall and understanding

After experiencing the Teach-Back method, the patient's understanding of their treatment is enhanced; this may lead to greater adherence.⁴



Why it's important:

The Teach-Back method improves patients' understanding and may lead to better outcomes.⁴

References:

1. Institute for Healthcare Improvement. Good questions for your good health. <http://www.ihl.org/resources/Pages/Tools/Ask-Me-3-Good-Questions-for-Your-Good-Health.aspx> [Accessed May 2, 2020].
2. Institute for Healthcare Improvement. Ask Me 3 Brochure. http://www.ihl.org/_layouts/15/ihl/login/login.aspx?ReturnURL=%2fresources%2fPages%2fTools%2fAsk-Me-3-Good-Questions-for-Your-Good-Health.aspx [Accessed May 1, 2020].
3. Schillinger D, Piette J, Grumbach K, et al. Closing the loop. *Arch Intern Med*. 2003;163(1):83-90.
4. AHRQ. Health Literacy Universal Precautions Toolkit – Tool 5. https://www.ahrq.gov/sites/default/files/publications/files/healthlittoolkit2_3.pdf [Accessed May 22, 2020].
5. Weiss BD. Health literacy and patient safety: help patients understand. <http://www.partnershiphp.org/Providers/HealthServices/Documents/Health%20Education/CandLToolKit/2%20Manual%20for%20Clinicians.pdf> [Accessed May 1, 2020].