



Whether you live with growth hormone deficiency (GHD) or care for someone with GHD, you can make medical appointments more productive by taking some simple steps. Get the most from your appointment by preparing the following information in advance.

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Things to Consider Before Your Growth Hormone Deficiency Appointment

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GET ORGANIZED

Before your appointment, gather all your medical information, including your insurance card; emergency contact info; personal medical history; family medical history; allergies; and results of any lab work, growth hormone stimulation tests, scans, imaging, or genetic testing you've had. (If you have questions about what your health care professional needs to know, call their office in advance and ask.) Your health care professional uses this data to evaluate your condition and decide what other testing you may need.

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PREPARE A MEDICATION LIST

Write down **all** the medications you take, including:

- Prescription drugs
- Over-the-counter medicines
- Vitamin supplements
- Mineral supplements
- Herbal products
- Nutritional supplements

Note the dosages you take and how frequently you take them. Sharing a complete, accurate list of medications with your health care professional is important because some medications may interact with treatments prescribed for GHD. Be sure to tell your health care professional if you are taking corticosteroids, insulin or other diabetes medications, and medications such as birth control pills that contain estrogen.

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MAKE A LIST OF YOUR PHYSICAL SYMPTOMS

Learning about your symptoms can help your health care professional understand your condition and know whether your treatment needs adjusting. Keeping a symptom journal is a helpful way to track symptoms. Make a note of which symptoms you have, when you have them, and how severe they are. Remember to tell your health care professional if you're having joint pain, changes in muscle strength or endurance, or sensitivity to heat or cold.

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MAKE A LIST OF CHANGES IN YOUR DAILY EXPERIENCES AND FEELINGS

GHD may affect you in surprising ways. Even if you think they're not related to GHD, tell your health care professional about any changes in your daily experiences and feelings, including feelings of anxiety or depression; trouble sleeping; changes in libido or sexual function; fatigue; or decrease in energy.

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WRITE DOWN YOUR GHD QUESTIONS

It's easy to forget to ask your health care professional questions during your appointment. To help you remember, write questions down in advance and bring them to your appointment. Some questions you may have about GHD include:

- What may have caused my GHD?
- Which of my symptoms are related to GHD?
- What test(s) do you recommend to learn more about my condition? (For example, blood tests, genetic tests, X-rays, scans, or imaging.)
- What is the purpose of the test(s) you're recommending?
- If you're recommending a growth hormone stimulation test, how can I prepare for it? What should I expect during the test? How long will it take?
- How soon will I receive my test results?
- How will my test results be shared with me? (For example, by phone, postal mail, or email or via an electronic medical portal.)
- After I receive my test results, what's the best way for me to ask additional questions?
- What is my diagnosis?
- What does my diagnosis mean for my future health and wellness?

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ARRIVE A FEW MINUTES EARLY FOR YOUR APPOINTMENT

Arriving early gives you time to fill out paperwork, including providing important information about your medical history, and to take a few deep breaths if needed before you go into the exam room.

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TAKE NOTES DURING YOUR APPOINTMENT

Bring a notepad and pen or your cell phone to write down what you discuss with your health care professional. It's helpful to review your notes after your appointment. You may also choose to bring along a family member or friend who can take notes or share in the conversation with your health care professional. Be clear with your friend or family member about how you would like them to support you during the appointment.

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ASK QUESTIONS ABOUT TREATMENT

If your health care professional recommends treatment for your GHD, be ready with questions so you can share decision-making about your treatment with them. Here are some questions you may want to ask:

- What treatment are you recommending?
- What are your goals with this treatment?
- What happens if I choose not to take this treatment?
- Are there other treatment options I should consider?
- What are the risks and benefits of this treatment?
- What side effects, if any, should I watch for?
- What should I do if I develop side effects?
- What improvements in signs and symptoms might I notice if I take the medication you're recommending?
- How soon after starting this medication might I notice improvements in signs and symptoms?
- Will this medication interact with any of the other medications I take?
- How often should I take this medication?
- If you're recommending daily somatropin injections, are weekly injections an option for me?
- If you're recommending medication injections, can I learn to self-inject it or have someone I live with give me the injections at home?
- How do I go about receiving training for home injections?
- What is the best way for me to follow up with you if I have more questions about this treatment?
- If I begin taking this medication, will testing be necessary afterward? If so, what kind of testing, and how often should I have it?

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FOLLOW THROUGH AFTER YOUR APPOINTMENT

Your care doesn't end when you leave your appointment. Follow through by taking these steps:

- Review your notes after your appointment and identify any questions you may still have.
- Contact your health care professional to ask additional questions.
- Schedule any tests and follow-up appointments that your health care professional recommended.
- If you are going to begin taking medication, have the prescription filled, schedule injection training if needed, and begin taking your medication as instructed.
- Reach out to your health care professional if you have questions once you start taking your medication or if you experience side effects.

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STAY IN TOUCH WITH YOUR HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONAL

People with GHD do best when they receive long-term follow-up care. See your health care professional as often as they recommend and contact them as needed if you have questions between appointments. Be open with them during all of your interactions and let them know if you forget to take your medication, have trouble paying for it, struggle to fit it into your life, or have other concerns. Remember that open communication empowers you to advocate for your health and to share treatment decisions with your health care professional. Working as a team, you and your health care professional can help you reach your wellness goals.