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# Are You in the Driver's Seat When it Comes to Your Health?

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By Dr. Chad Larson

Now more than ever people are taking charge of their own health because of easy access to the Internet that allows more people to be armed with knowledge about their health. For medical professionals this is both good and bad. It's good in that people feel more empowered than ever about their health, but bad in that access to all of that information can lead to self-diagnosis of their own ailments, which is potentially problematic. That said, taking control of one's own health by working in conjunction with a healthcare provider is the first step to improve a person's overall health.

Here are a few questions to ask yourself and tips to make sure you are in the driver's seat when it comes to your health:

### 1) **Are you getting an unclear diagnosis from your healthcare professional?**

If you aren't feeling well and your doctor doesn't know why, no one is in the driver's seat to your health. Due to scheduling demands, most medical professionals have a limited amount of time to spend during a patient's visit. If there isn't a clear way to diagnose your health concern with a blood test or other procedure, sometimes a process of elimination is used as a way to identify what's wrong. With all of this guesswork, it's no wonder patients often feel uncertain and uneasy with their diagnosis. In order to take charge in this situation, I suggest partnering with your healthcare provider to search for what types of tests would assist in pinpointing a clear diagnosis. There are several websites that are patient-friendly and that give consumer information about why a patient may feel unwell. Ask your healthcare provider for some options. Or, depending on your symptoms, start by searching for possible dietary and environmental triggers (often overlooked by your doctor) or use search terms such as "immunology" and "sensitivities."

### 2) **Are you researching your family health history?**

Do you know if your mother or father suffered from any autoimmune disorders? Do you know if they were allergic to or had food sensitivities? Write down and keep handy your health history as it pertains to your relatives. According to the American Autoimmune Related Diseases Association, 54 million people have autoimmune diseases, many of which go undiagnosed. If you have a history of autoimmune disease in your family, you are more likely to develop one yourself, [according to the national institutes of health](#). Tracing your family health history is important and highly recommended when you want to be more in control of your health and your risk factors to disease.

### 3) **Are you tracking what you eat?**

With genetically modified foods, increased use of pesticides, and glue or gum additives in food, food reactivity is becoming more commonly tied to feelings of overall unhealthiness. Gluten and other foods can have a huge impact on health. Ask your healthcare provider if what you are experiencing is possibly a reaction to what you are eating. This is one easy way to identify the cause of some common health issues such as brain fog, bloating, tiredness and joint pain.

### 4) **Do you follow a successful exercise routine?**

Exercise is a great way to get on the road to being a healthier version of yourself. Exercise has a positive effect on many chronic health concerns, including body weight issues. Conversely, remaining overweight or

obese can lead to major problems like diabetes, high blood pressure and heart disease. Talk to your healthcare provider about your health and about beginning an exercise routine.

With so much information about health at your fingertips, it is easy to get overwhelmed and frustrated by not knowing why you are feeling unhealthy. Remember that partnering with your healthcare provider and being an advocate for yourself is the first step on the road to wellness. The questions to consider and tips above can help empower you to a healthier and happier lifestyle while putting you in control of one—if not the most—important things in your life – your health.

Dr. Larson, advisor and consultant to Cyrex Laboratories, holds a Doctor of Naturopathic Medicine degree from Southwest College of Naturopathic Medicine and a Doctor of Chiropractic degree from Southern California University of Health Sciences. He is a Certified Clinical Nutritionist and a Certified Strength and Conditioning Specialist. He particularly pursues advanced developments in the fields of endocrinology, orthopedics, sports medicine, and environmentally-induced chronic disease. Cyrex is a clinical immunology laboratory specializing in functional immunology and autoimmunity. Cyrex offers multi-tissue antibody testing for the early detection and monitoring of today's complex autoimmune conditions. Cyrex develops innovative testing arrays through continuous collaboration with leading experts in medical research and clinical practice. Cyrex differs from other labs by offering four pillars of excellence, including antigen purity, optimized antigen concentration, antigen-specific validation and parallel testing technology. Cyrex is based in Phoenix, Arizona and is a CLIA licensed laboratory. For more information please visit [joincyrex.com/patients](http://joincyrex.com/patients).

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