

VENICE PLASTIC SURGERY

A.E. HAAS, M.D.

Cosmetic, Reconstructive, Face, Breast, and Hand Surgery

Being a good patient

How can a patient help in their own medical care? The first thing is to give the doctor a full medical history. This includes a list of all medications and the milligrams of each one. It amazes me how often patients come to us and have no idea what medications they are taking. They sometimes mix up the dose and timing of when pills should be taken. We also need to know things you take that are not prescription medications, as holistic medications and vitamins.

When you go to the doctor, especially a new doctor just bring all your medications with you. That way we can see what you were prescribed and how often you are supposed to be taking the drugs. Tell the doctor if you have changed the dosing schedule. Some patients were instructed to take their medications 2 times a day but decided themselves to only take it once a day or maybe 3 times a day. We need to know if you are doing this. Medications are very important to physicians as there are many interactions. We cannot make appropriate recommendations unless we know exactly what you are taking and how often.

We also need to know why you are taking each medication. Are you on aspirin for arthritis or to thin your blood because you have heart trouble. Is that lung medication for emphysema or for asthma. These are different medical problems treated by similar medications.

When we give you a prescription, as for antibiotics, you should take them as instructed. Take them all. Do not stop them because you are feeling better. If you stop them too soon then a relapse may occur. This is frequently worse than the original problem. Follow the doctors instructions exactly. If you have a question or you think you are having a side effect then call the doctor. Never stop the medication by yourself.

The next thing a good patient does is bring in a list of your previous surgeries and hospitalizations. Document the date of these events. On this sheet document the list of your medications and dosing schedules. List any medications that caused an allergic reaction. Some individuals have multiple allergies to drugs. Note them all. Name other doctors you have seen in the past. A copy of an old EKG or cardiogram is often useful as is any recent laboratory report.

Pathology reports are very important. If you had a cancer we need to know what type. Just saying you had a skin cancer is not enough. Was it basal cell or squamous cell cancer or melanoma? These are all very different. So are the types of breast cancer. What type is it? Bring the path report. The size counts. Was it 1 centimeter across or 4? How was the cancer treated? Was it cured with surgery, radiation or with chemotherapy or some combination? If chemo was used, which drug?

Some patients are actually this organized. They do all of these things we have talked about. Doctors can treat you better and quicker when they have all the information in hand. There will be less room for error. Good medical care involves good doctors and good patients.

**The above represents the opinion of A. E. Haas, M.D.
Venice Plastic Surgery, Venice Wound Center, Lakeside Medical Center**

Just call us directly. No referral needed unless required by your insurance company

836 Sunset Lake Blvd # 103, Venice, FL 34292
(941) 492-4775