



PATIENT ADVOCACY CHECKLIST

Medical appointments can be overwhelming. Use this checklist to organize your thoughts and ensure your voice is heard.

1. Preparation: Gathering Your Map

- Request copies of your most recent MRI images on a disc.
- Write down your 'Top 3' most debilitating symptoms.
- Create a simple 1-page summary of your medical history.
- Bring a notebook and pen (or a recording device, if allowed).
- Bring a 'Support Partner' to be your second set of ears.

2. The Compass: Questions to Ask

- What type of Chiari do I have (Type 0, 1, 1.5, etc.)?
- Do my MRI scans show a syrinx (fluid cyst)?
- Have we ruled out related conditions like Ehlers-Danlos (EDS)?
- Is surgery necessary right now, or is 'watchful waiting' safe?
- If surgery is recommended: What specific technique do you use?
- What are the risks if I choose to do nothing?

3. The Megaphone: Communication Tips

- State your goal early: 'I need to know if my fatigue is related.'
- Use the 'Repeat Back' method: 'So, what I hear you saying is...'
- If you don't understand a term, ask for a plain-English definition.
- Ask about the 'Plan B': 'If this doesn't work, what is next?'

4. Notes & Action Items
