



## GETTING THE CONVERSATION STARTED

Many people at one time or another have had difficulty talking with their health care providers. Challenges to starting the conversation might include that health care providers:

- Use technical words
- Don't explain medications
- Prescribe medicines too quickly
- Don't listen completely
- Are in a hurry

If that is how you are feeling, especially if you feel that your concerns about shale gas development are not taken seriously, this guide is for you.

### TOP TIP

To make the most of the time you have with your health care provider, **bring up concerns at the beginning of the appointment time, rather than waiting until the end.** That will help you focus your time with your health care provider on what is really bothering you.

## Keep track of your symptoms for your next visit...

*\*On a scale from 1-10, how severe are they? 1 being slight to 10 being worst ever.*

Notes/ Environmental observations	How long did it last?	Intensity	Symptom(s)	Date
Noticed strong odor before symptoms started	6 hours	9 out of 10	Shortness of breath, headache	Example: 1/5/17

## Tips for Talking to Your Health Care Provider

### Concerns about Shale Gas Development ("Fracking")



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## PREPARE FOR YOUR VISIT

**Keep track of your symptoms.** Writing them down in a notebook, calendar or using a chart, like the one on the back of this pamphlet, is often helpful. **Some things to keep track of include:**

- When did the symptoms start?
- On a scale from 1-10, how severe are they?
- What do you do to manage your symptoms, including medicines? Does it help?
- Have there been any changes in your life or surrounding environment that coincide with your symptoms?

**Write down a list of your concerns to discuss at the visit.** You will probably be able to discuss only 2 or 3 at one visit, so put your most important concerns at the top. **If your list is longer than 2 or 3 concerns, give your health care provider the whole list.** It is important for your health care provider to be aware of all your concerns. Just because symptoms don't seem important to you, they provide important data related to your condition to your health care provider.

**Take someone with you!** It is difficult for most of us to recall all details of a visit, so it helps to have a note taker to write things down to review later.

After your visit, record any changes in symptoms so you can report them at follow-up visits.

## ASK QUESTIONS AT YOUR VISIT

**Ask about your diagnosis, treatments, and what to expect between this visit and the next one.**

**Write down the answers!**

**If you have any questions after your appointment, call your provider's office immediately.**

## SUMMARIZE WHAT YOU HEARD

**Repeat back to your health care provider your understanding of what you have been told so that you both have the same understanding.**

**Ask for written instructions as needed.**

**If it will be difficult to follow the recommendations, explain that to your provider and develop an alternate plan.**

If your health care provider wants more information about this topic, refer them to EHP's website: [www.environmentalhealthproject.org](http://www.environmentalhealthproject.org). We have resources available specifically for health care providers.

*Source: Sections adapted from Stanford University Chronic Disease Self-Management Program (2006).*

## COMMONLY REPORTED SYMPTOMS NEAR SHALE GAS DEVELOPMENT OR "FRACKING"

- Sleep disturbance
- Headache
- Nose or throat irritation
- Stress/anxiety
- Cough
- Shortness of breath
- Sinus problems
- Fatigue
- Eye or skin irritation
- Rash
- Worsening Asthma

*Source: EHP Technical Report Issue 5: Health and Unconventional Natural Gas Development - Up-to-date findings*

**Answer the following questions and share with your health care provider to better inform them of your possible exposures:**

*\*Please circle all that apply.*

**1. I live near:**

- Well pad
- Impoundment pond
- Compressor station
- Pipeline
- Processing plant
- Railyard where silica transfer occurs
- Industrial waste site

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**2. The source of water to my home is:**

- Private well      Public system/company

**3. I have noticed a change in taste or odor in my water:**

- Yes      No

**4. My water has been tested by a laboratory:**

- Yes      No
- Results:      Normal      Abnormal

**5. My bathroom is vented outside:**

- Yes      No

**6. My kitchen is vented outside:**

- Yes      No

**7. I have experienced unusual smells or cloudiness in my air:**

- Yes      No