

Tips for Talking With a Health Professional

COMMONLY REPORTED SYMPTOMS NEAR SHALE GAS DEVELOPMENT

- Sleep disruption
- Stress/anxiety
- Inability to concentrate



Created by alimasykurm from the Noun Project

- Headache
- Itchy/painful eyes
- Sinus problems



Created by Yazmin Alanis from the Noun Project

- Shortness of breath
- Cough
- Wheezing
- Sore throat



Created by Binpodo from the Noun Project

- Fatigue
- Drowsiness
- Nausea
- Skin rashes and irritation



Created by Pixelcatom from the Noun Project

For more recommendations about how to protect your health and monitor your air, water, and soil quality, visit [our website](#).



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GETTING THE CONVERSATION STARTED

Many people, at one time or another, have had difficulty talking with a health professional. Talking about shale gas exposures is no exception. These conversations can be challenging when patients have difficulty understanding the technical terminology used by a health professional, when patients lack information about prescribed medication, or when patients feel like there isn't enough time to explain their concerns to the health professional.

While these discussions can be difficult and at times intimidating, it is important to remember that you are your own advocate, and you deserve to receive medical care in a supportive and healthy environment. This collection of information serves as a tool for both you and your health professional to work together, in the best interest of your health and wellbeing.

PREPARE FOR YOUR VISIT

How to make the most of your time when meeting with a health professional:



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Prepare for your visit. Consult your health diary to see if there have been any changes with your health and brainstorm questions you might ask. Set an agenda and be prepared with what you want to discuss. Bring up concerns at the beginning of the appointment rather than waiting until the end. That will help you focus your time on what is really bothering you.



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Ask questions at the start of the appointment to help you focus your time. Continue to ask questions throughout the appointment. Even the best health professionals can at times share complex terms or lots of information quickly. Don't be afraid to ask for clarification, for information to be repeated, or for an explanation of something using plain language. If you feel a specific point was brushed off, bring it to the health professional's attention again. It can give them the chance to add more information or explain their response.



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Tinashe Mugayi from
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Be honest. It's important to share how you are feeling, your concerns, and relevant health symptoms. Sometimes you may feel embarrassed or afraid to share personal information, but the more you share, the better a health professional can try to help. While their job is to help you feel better, they are also required to uphold your privacy.



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Summarize what you heard during the appointment and repeat it back to the health professional to confirm your understanding. If you need additional support, ask to record the conversation, or request written instruction or notes to help remind you of what was discussed. Most phones have voice recording apps pre-installed, and there are other apps, like Abridge, made for recording medical conversations. You can also bring a trusted friend or family member to provide support.

At the end of the day, remember that you have the power. If you feel a health professional isn't listening or isn't able to offer the support you are looking for, consider finding a different provider. It's important to have a responsive, supportive health professional, and ultimately one who is the right fit for you.

If your health professional wants more information on this topic, refer them to environmentalhealthproject.org. We have resources available specifically for health professionals.

SURVEY FOR POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL EXPOSURE

**Check all that apply*

1. I live near:

- Well pad
- Truck traffic
- Processing/cryogenic/fractionation plant
- Pipeline
- Landfill accepting shale gas waste
- Injection well accepting shale gas waste
- Impoundment pond
- Metering station
- Compressor station
- Pigging station
- Wastewater treatment plant (WWTP) accepting shale gas waste
- Petrochemical plant

2. There have been incidents such as spills, leaks, or explosions that have occurred near my home, school, or place of work.

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

3. I have noticed a change in the taste, odor, or appearance in the water source at my home. Yes No

4. I have noticed unusual smells or changes in appearance in the air near my home. Yes No

5. I have noticed unusual dust, film, or residue on the outside of my home or car. Yes No

6. I have experienced the following symptoms during or after activities near my home.

- Sore or irritated throat
- Cough or wheezing
- Itching of skin or rash
- Shortness of breath
- Headache
- Dizziness
- Sleep disturbance
- Fatigue
- Itchy/burning eyes
- Sinus symptoms (runny nose/postnasal drip, etc.)
- Nosebleeds
- Abdominal pain/discomfort
- Nausea
- Significant weight loss/gain
- Anxiety
- Irritability/mood swings

Other (list):

7. I have discussed symptoms with other doctors or health professionals. Yes No

8. I have been diagnosed with medical conditions. Yes No

If Yes, explain:

9. I work onsite at a shale gas facility or in the transport and processing of shale gas waste.

- Yes
- No
- I don't, but someone in my household does.

EXAMPLE

Date	1/5/17		
Symptom(s)	Shortness of breath: 4, headache - 9		
Duration	6 hours		
Notes	strong odor before symptoms started sunny clear day lots of heavy truck traffic		

On a scale of 1-10, how severe is the symptom? 1 being slight to 10 being worst ever.

Environmental Protection Agency. (2022, August 5). *About the State School Environmental Health Guidelines*. <https://www.epa.gov/schools/about-state-school-environmental-health-guidelines#importance>

Environmental Health Project. (2023). *Health Impacts of Shale Gas Development: A Collection of Research*. https://www.environmentalhealthproject.org/_files/ugd/a9ce25_feddfe7415ba4d3b894e94821aa40aab.pdf

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