

Steps for Becoming Your Own Advocate

- Write down your questions and goals prior to your appointments.
- Bring a loved one along to participate in your appointments and to take notes.
- Discuss your takeaways after the visit, too. This will help you retain the information you heard.
- Get past your fears of “bothering your doctor”—be honest about how you are feeling.
- Mention any symptoms or side effects, because this can have a direct impact on your care.
- If you don’t feel like you are being heard, consider getting a second opinion or even changing doctors.

What Is an Empowered Patient?

The World Health Organization defines being an empowered patient as “a process through which people gain greater control over decisions and actions affecting their health.”

Shared Decision-Making (SDM)

Process of communication by which patients and clinicians collaborate to make healthcare decisions. The process encourages patients to take a more active role in their care and treatment.

Tools for Learning About CLL

- Visit credible websites to learn about CLL, including advocacy groups such as:
 - Patient Empowerment Network: powerfulpatients.org/CLL
 - Cancer Support Community: cancersupportcommunity.org
 - Leukemia Research Foundation: leukemiarf.org
 - The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society (LLS): lls.org
- Ask your healthcare team for CLL resource recommendations.
- Use your patient portal to:
 - View your medical records and lab results.
 - Use the messaging feature to communicate with members of your healthcare team.
 - Access online educational resources and tools.
 - Schedule and view upcoming appointments.
 - View after-visit summaries.

Remember, online information is never a substitute for medical advice. You should always consult your doctor about what you’ve learned.

Patient Empowerment Network CLL Resources

- [Office Visit Planners](#)
- [Insist! CLL](#)
- [The CLL Pro-Active Patient Toolkit](#)
- [Clinical Trials 201](#)
- [Thrive CLL](#)

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