This guide belongs to me

I can write, draw, point, use pictures, communicate with AAC, ask for help or skip any activity.

MY APPOINTMENT CARD

I like to be called

I am going to

- [ ] Doctor / health
- [ ] Dentist
- [ ] School
- [ ] Something else

My appointment is on / at

Who will be with me?

MY CHOICE

I can ask what will happen, choose how to communicate and say when I need a break.

GROWN-UP SUPPORT

Ask the appointment team what to expect. Explain honestly and avoid promises you cannot guarantee.

One thing I would like adults to know about me

You do not have to complete this guide. Your comfort, communication and choices matter.

My appointment story

This is one possible order. A grown-up can change the steps to match my actual appointment.

1

BEFORE

We find out where we are going, who we might meet and what may happen.

2

TRAVEL

We choose how to get there and what to bring for comfort.

3

ARRIVE

We check in. We may wait somewhere quieter if that is possible.

4

MEET

Someone explains their name, their job and what they plan to do.

5

APPOINTMENT

I can ask questions, use AAC, request time or show that I need a pause.

6

AFTERWARDS

We find out what happens next and make space to recover.

Something I want to know before we go

If plans change, tell me what is different, what stays the same and what happens next.

Getting ready my way

Small choices can make the day more predictable. I only need to choose what feels useful.

FIND OUT FIRST

Where is it? How long might it take? Will there be waiting, questions, touch or equipment? What can the team explain beforehand?

I might like to bring

- [ ] Headphones / ear defenders
- [ ] A familiar object
- [ ] A drink or snack if allowed
- [ ] Something to read or do
- [ ] My communication device
- [ ] A comfort item

What helps me prepare?

- [ ] Seeing photos of the place
- [ ] A short, clear explanation
- [ ] Knowing the order of events
- [ ] Practising one step
- [ ] Having extra time
- [ ] Not talking about it too much

MY BEFORE-WE-GO PLAN

The person helping me will:

Grown-up tip: Ask the team about quieter times, step-by-step explanations, sensory adjustments and whether a pre-visit is possible.

Waiting in my way

Waiting can feel long, noisy or uncertain. We can make a plan before we arrive.

WHAT MIGHT BE HARD?

Bright lights, smells, other people, unexpected sounds, being hungry, not knowing how long.

WHAT MIGHT HELP?

A quieter space, a timer, headphones, a movement break, something familiar or waiting outside.

I could try

- [ ] Ask how long the wait might be
- [ ] Move or stretch if safe
- [ ] Look at a visual timer
- [ ] Sit away from noise
- [ ] Use headphones
- [ ] Ask to wait elsewhere

If waiting becomes too much, I can...

MY WAITING PLAN

My grown-up can tell the team: “Waiting is becoming difficult. Is there a quieter option or an update?”

I can communicate my way

Speech is not the only way to communicate. Adults should notice and respect all my ways of saying something.

Ways I might communicate

- [ ] Speaking
- [ ] Pointing
- [ ] Writing or typing
- [ ] Pictures or symbols
- [ ] AAC device
- [ ] Gesture or sign
- [ ] Showing an object
- [ ] With my grown-up's help

Words or messages I may want ready

I NEED TIME

Please give me a moment.

PLEASE EXPLAIN

Tell me what happens next.

STOP / PAUSE

I need a break now.

NO TOUCH YET

Please ask before touching me.

My own words, picture or signal

Grown-up tip: Give processing time. Avoid repeating questions quickly. Check understanding without demanding eye contact.

During my appointment

I can be included in decisions about my body and my support. Adults can explain what is happening.

A HELPFUL ORDER

1. Tell me what will happen. 2. Show me equipment if appropriate. 3. Ask before touch. 4. Give me time. 5. Tell me when a step is finished.

Things that may help me

- [ ] One person speaking at a time
- [ ] Short, clear instructions
- [ ] A warning before touch
- [ ] A support person beside me
- [ ] A countdown if I choose
- [ ] A break between steps

IF SOMETHING FEELS TOO MUCH

I can say or show: “Pause.” “I need more information.” “I am not ready.” My grown-up can help communicate this.

Something I would like the appointment team to do

Important: Some urgent procedures cannot wait. Adults should explain this honestly, use the least distressing safe approach and seek appropriate clinical guidance.

My pause plan

A pause can help me feel safer. We can agree on a signal and what adults will do when they notice it.

MY PAUSE SIGNAL

I might say “pause”, show a card, make a gesture, use AAC, become quiet or move away. My grown-up can help others recognise my signal.

When I need a pause, I might want

- [ ] Less talking
- [ ] More personal space
- [ ] A quieter place
- [ ] A drink if appropriate
- [ ] To move or stretch
- [ ] My support person nearby

My signal or words

What I want adults to do next

Grown-up tip: Agree a pause plan with the team before the appointment where possible. Check what can safely be paused.

Afterwards: how did it go?

There is no right answer. I can rest first and come back to this page later, or skip it.

What felt okay or helped?

What was difficult?

Next time I would like...

- [ ] More information beforehand
- [ ] A quieter waiting space
- [ ] More time to respond
- [ ] A different communication option
- [ ] More breaks
- [ ] Something else

ONE THING TO REMEMBER FOR NEXT TIME

Grown-up tip: Notice effort without judging the outcome. Share useful adjustments with future appointment teams. Recovery may take time.