

# GP and hospital appointments with APD



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A visit to your GP or a hospital appointment can be a stressful and worrying experience without coping with Auditory Processing Disorder (APD). These tips can help take some of the stress out of your visit. They can also be used if you are accompanying a child.

1. When booking an appointment at your doctor's surgery, request a longer appointment than normal each time, to allow time for delayed processing/communication issues.
2. Tell the receptionist that with APD they may need to come and get you if you don't respond when they call your name (due to background noise/blocking out sound).
3. Make notes beforehand of anything you need to tell the doctor/consultant: symptoms, any deterioration/improvements, worries about your illness/condition, side effects from medication etc. This avoids worrying when you get there about word recall problems/forgetting something. Keep it in your hand to remember to give it to the doctor/consultant when you get into the consulting room.
4. Ask that APD and any communication difficulties be noted in your file /your child's so all medical staff will be made aware of this. On your first visit, you can take notes with you. This can include things like speaking while facing you to allow for lip-reading, making eye contact, speaking clearly, giving you time to process speech and to formulate responses etc. allowing for word recall difficulties, also whether you would prefer follow-up contact by email/letter and not by phone, or whatever would help you best to understand.
5. In the waiting-room, it helps to always sit facing where the person calling you might come from, near the desk or open door to the clinic. It is better not to read magazines, phone or text etc. or chat much to whoever is with you, unless they have been tasked with listening for your name. Be watchful for someone about to speak to you; they will usually repeat your name if you miss it. You can let the receptionist know that you need time to process and ask that whoever calls you should speak loudly, so they can be heard above all the waiting-room noise.
6. Don't be afraid to ask people to repeat or rephrase things or speak slowly if it helps you to process or lipread.
7. In the consulting room, ask the doctor/consultant to write down anything important that they need you to remember, or if you feel is appropriate, you can ask to take a family member/friend without APD to go in with you when you are talking to your doctor/consultant, so that they can make notes. This also helps if the doctor/consultant has an unfamiliar accent, or speaks very fast etc.
8. Ask for any leaflets/hand-outs/websites about your illness/condition so that you can read up on it later.
9. If your doctor/consultant will not comply with these requests, perhaps it would be better to register with a more disability-friendly doctor or request to see another consultant!
10. Always carry an APD alert card to avoid explanations which can waste time.

Remember, it is your appointment and they are there to help you: just make sure they know how. Visit <https://apdsupportuk.yolasite.com/> for further information on APD.