

# What need to know about your appointment

## Therapist are resources

Often people feel uncomfortable seeing a therapist for personal problem, but everyone is faced with challenges that are hard to fix alone. Getting help for personal problems is just as important as getting help for medical problems.

## How counseling sessions can help

Therapists can help you with many different problems. The therapist will help you:

**Figure out what the problem is.**

**Create a plan of action to address your concerns.**

**Handle a crisis and assist** you with sorting through options.

**Fix a problem.** Many issues can be resolved in just a few sessions.

**Start a treatment process.**

## What to bring to the first session

**A list of questions.** Write down your questions and bring the list with you. Sometimes it's hard to remember all the issues. Writing them down can help.

**Notes about problem.** Bring anything that will help you tell the therapist about your problem. This can include notes, documents or records.

**History of problem.** Write down how long you've had the problem. Also share similar problems you've had in the past and how you have fixed them.

**Medicines.** Bring all medicines you are taking. Bring them with the pharmacy label if possible. It will help your therapist provide a better evaluation.

**Significant others.** Consider bringing family members or others to the first session if it will help you.

## Understand the session process

**Environment.** A therapist's office is usually designed for private conversations. It should be comfortable and quiet.

**Assessment.** You will be asked to fill out some forms. The therapist will ask you some questions to better understand your concerns. He or she will talk with you about your options.

**Referrals.** The therapist may send you to a specialist or another clinician.

## What to expect when you call your therapist

We want it to be as easy as possible for you to get the care you need. Calling a therapist may mean leaving a message and waiting for him or her to return your call.

Therapists see members during business hours. They may not be able to answer their phone when you call. Leave a message and wait for a return call within 24 hours.

The therapist may give you instructions on their voicemail message when you call. They may ask you to leave a cell phone number. They may tell you what to do if your call is an emergency.

\* This information was provided in part by DMAS