



Being a good healthcare consumer.

Maximize your investment,
your visit and your wellbeing.



We're here. For you.

FHN

Healthcare is something we all invest in at one time or another, so it's important to educate ourselves when it comes to consuming it. Just like you'd take the time to get the facts and investigate ratings when looking for a new car or other important investment, it's equally important to make sure you are informed in order to make good choices when it comes to healthcare.

There's no more important time to be careful with your investments than during this uncertain economic era. So to make the most of your dollar and healthcare experience, here are a few tips that can help you become a better healthcare consumer.



Defining treatment options.

How do you know when you need to go to the emergency room, when you need to schedule an office visit, or if you just need FHN FastCare for common illnesses and injuries? FHN offers all three, and here are some good rules of thumb when deciding what treatment option is best for you:

- **Emergency Room** – Most health problems are not emergencies, and being treated as such when they're not can be unnecessarily expensive. Heart attacks, difficulty breathing, severe and uncontrolled bleeding, stroke symptoms, and uncontrollable pain, however, are emergencies that do need immediate attention. Call 911 and/or come to the emergency room as quickly as possible.
- **Office Visit** – If you've experienced prolonged pain, chronic symptoms of any kind, fever or other similar concerns, an office visit with an FHN healthcare provider may be best for you. Appointments can usually be made within days or even hours of your call and your provider will be able to spend more time with you in a relaxed environment. Call your provider's office to make an appointment. If you don't have a healthcare provider, please call the FHN Physician Referral Center at 815-599-7060 or toll-free at 888-433-5700.
- **FHN FastCare** – FHN also offers healthcare without an appointment at FHN FastCare. For symptoms such as sore throats, ear aches, sinus infections, flu or cold symptoms, urinary tract infections, insect bites and more, a visit to FHN FastCare is a good option for you. It's quick, inexpensive and conveniently located in Shopko on South Street in Freeport. No appointment is needed.

Choosing a provider who's right for you.

Don't wait until you really need one to choose a primary healthcare provider. Take the time when you're healthy and have the time to make the right decisions. In choosing an FHN provider, always ask:

- Is this provider well trained and experienced?
- Will this provider be available when needed?
- What visits will my insurance cover?
- Am I comfortable with him or her?
- Information on all FHN providers can be found at www.fhn.org.

For provider referral, call the FHN Physician Referral Center at 815-599-7060 or toll-free 888-433-5700.

A white lab coat is shown, partially open, revealing a silver stethoscope with white earpieces. The letters "M.D." are embroidered in black on the left chest area of the coat.

M.D.

Helping your provider help you.

Your visit with your FHN healthcare provider can benefit you more if you take the proper steps before, during and at the end of your visit.

Before

To make the most of your experience with FHN, it's important that you take some preliminary steps before a visit.

- Have an emergency contact's name, address and telephone number available.
- Bring a list of medications you are currently taking.
- Come equipped with your own personal health history.
- Bring your current insurance card and know your Social Security number.

During

During your visit, be prepared to give your provider accurate and relevant information. The more you can share, the better treatment you will receive.

- State your main concern first.
- Describe your symptoms and concerns.
- Take notes for later review.
- Ask questions! Never be afraid to “bother” a provider with questions. It is your right and responsibility to have a comfortable understanding of your treatment.

At the end

Make sure you clarify everything with your provider by asking these important questions:

- Do I need to return for another visit?
- Do I phone in for test results?
- Will I experience any side effects from any treatments prescribed?
If so, should I contact someone, and if so, whom?
- When do I need to follow up?
- Is there anything else I need to know?

Following up.

Now that you've seen your FHN healthcare provider, it may be time to take medication. It is always important to have a clear understanding of what you are taking, how to take it and what other options are available. Here are some things you can do to make sure you are an active participant in your continued healthcare:

- Always ask “why?” before agreeing to medical testing, medication or treatment. Doing so will put you more at ease, and may help you and your provider discover other options that better suit your needs.
- Don't be afraid to ask about your medical tests and prescriptions. Get to know the names, functions, costs and risks. Make sure you know how to take medications, and how to prepare for medical tests.
- Let your provider know what you expect from the treatment and ask if it's realistic. Ask about side effects, pain, recovery time and long-term effects.





Researching your symptoms and diagnosis.

Researching your situation will give you a greater understanding of the provider's language and rationale. **Always be cautious of potentially inaccurate Web sites.** Although many are professionally handled and appear quite reliable, there are always risks of coming across inaccurate information. The FHN Health Resource Library located at FHN Memorial Hospital on Stephenson Street in Freeport is a good resource, and is free and open to the public. You'll receive:

- Free access to databases containing up-to-date healthcare information.
- Free printing and copying of health information.
- Ability to check out health resource materials from the collection after registering.

For more information call 815-599-6728 or visit www.fhn.org.

Billing information

Healthcare billing can be very complex, but there are some ways to check your bills so that you understand what you, your insurance and/or your employer is paying for:

- Make sure you have received all services listed, and understand why.
- Check dosages and amounts for accuracy.
- Note the total cost of care, and how much your insurance or employer has paid.

For insurance and billing questions, please call the FHN Central Business Office at 815-599-7950 or toll-free at 877-720-1555.

Being a good healthcare consumer.

Having a better understanding of the healthcare system is always beneficial to you, the healthcare consumer. Knowing what treatment options are available, the processes involved in visits and billing, and the broad range of choices you can make and directions you can take allow you to have an optimal healthcare experience. FHN is glad to help you through your healthcare process, and applauds your effort to be a good healthcare consumer.



We're here. For you.

FHN

1045 W. Stephenson Street
Freeport, IL 61032
Phone: 815-599-6000
Toll Free: 800-747-4131
www.fhn.org

