



MY PARTICIPATION PROTOCOL™

How I choose to show up, participate, ask,
learn, communicate and take an active role
in my care and healing.

My care includes me.

A diagnosis can suddenly bring many people into my life including physicians, nurses, navigators, technicians, therapists, family members, friends, pastors, priests, and spiritual and prayer supporters. Each may bring knowledge, experience, skill, love and support.

But I bring something no one else can bring.

Me.

I bring my history. My body. My questions. My beliefs. My values. My faith. My intuition. My priorities. My hopes. My concerns. My life.

I am not simply the recipient of my care.

I am an active participant in it.

This is my commitment to how I choose to participate in the healing journey before me.

I Will Show Up

I will show up for myself and for the care I have chosen.

I will participate as fully as I am able.

I will remember that being frightened, uncertain, overwhelmed or tired does not take away my voice or my place in the conversation.

I belong in the room.

I Will Show Up

I will ask questions.

I will ask again when I do not understand.

I will ask what something means.

I will ask why something is being recommended.

I will ask about benefits, risks, alternatives and other reasonable options.

I will not apologize for needing information before making decisions about my body and my life.

I Will Listen

Participation is not only speaking.

I will listen to the knowledge and experience of those caring for me.

I will remain open to information I did not expect and answers I may not want to hear.

I will seek understanding rather than allowing fear to fill in what I do not know.

I Will Speak

I will communicate honestly with my care team.

I will speak about what I am experiencing physically and emotionally.

I will share concerns that may affect my care.

I will communicate the values, beliefs and spiritual practices that are important to me.

I will remember that my voice matters even when I am surrounded by people who know more about medicine than I do.

They are experts in medicine. I am the expert in knowing me.

I Will Learn

I will seek the information I need without expecting myself to become a medical professional.

I will ask for explanations in language I can understand.

I will distinguish between information that helps me participate and information that leaves me frightened, confused or overwhelmed.

I give myself permission to say:

"That is enough information for today."

And I give myself permission to say:

"I need to understand more."

I Will Participate in My Decisions

I understand that recommendations may sometimes need timely consideration.

Whenever reasonably possible, I will give myself the space I need to understand my choices.

I may pray.

I may seek another medical opinion.

I may talk with someone I trust.

I may ask additional questions.

I may take time for quiet and discernment.

My participation does not mean I must make every decision alone.

It means I will not abandon myself while decisions are being made.

I Will Bring My Faith With Me

My faith does not remain outside the medical office.

I may pray before appointments.

I may pray before treatment.

I may pray before making important decisions.

I may pray for the physicians, nurses and others caring for me.

I may ask others to pray with me.

I welcome excellent medical care and the presence of God in the same room.

For me, they do not need to compete.

I Will Remember What Is Still Mine

There may be many things during this journey that I cannot control.

Participation does not mean pretending otherwise.

But there are things that remain mine.

My questions.

My values.

My faith.

My voice.

My choices.

My boundaries.

My words.

My participation.

And the life in which all of these decisions are taking place.

How My Care Team Can Help Me Participate

I invite the people caring for me to recognize me as an active participant in my care.

Please speak with me, not simply about me.

Please welcome my questions.

Please help me understand information that affects my choices.

Please recognize that my spiritual beliefs and personal values are part of who I am and may influence how I experience and make decisions about my care.

Please allow reasonable opportunities for prayer, reflection, questions and discussion when circumstances permit.

Please tell me when something is medically urgent so I can understand when time matters.

I respect the knowledge, training and responsibilities you bring to my care.

I ask that you respect the knowledge, values, beliefs and lived experience I bring to it.

My Commitment

I will participate in my care rather than disappear inside of it.

I will ask.

I will listen.

I will learn.

I will speak.

I will pray.

I will discern.

I will choose.

I will participate.

This is my body. This is my life. This is my healing journey. And I am here.

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

What I most want my care team to know about me:

My Participation Protocol™ is a personal communication and self-advocacy tool. It does not replace medical advice, informed consent, emergency care or communication with qualified healthcare professionals.