

Make the appointment count

A useful visit ends with three things: a working diagnosis, a plan, and a date to check whether the plan worked. If you leave without all three, the visit isn't finished.

Take with you

- **The shoes you actually wear.** Not the good pair — the ones you're in every day. The wear pattern shows where the pressure is going, and it's more reliable than anything you can describe.
- Your inserts, if you use them
- Your medicine and supplement list, or the bottles
- This sheet, filled in

Before you go — your one-minute summary

Where it hurts, one side or both: _____

When it started: _____

What makes it worse: _____

What I've already tried, and what happened: _____

The everyday thing I want back: _____

That last line matters more than it looks. "I want to walk the dog again" gives your clinician something to aim at. "It hurts" doesn't.

Questions worth asking

If they suggest...	Ask
Exercise, or resting it	What can I keep doing, and what should change?
Inserts or a device	Which symptom should improve, and by when?
An injection or procedure	What does this add, what are the risks, and what is the full cost?
Imaging	What would the scan change about the plan?
Surgery	How many of these do you do? What's the recovery like, week by week?

Ask for the plain-English version before the credit-card version.

Before you leave — say the plan back in your own words

Working diagnosis: _____ Should get better by: _____

Keep doing: _____ Next review: _____

Change for now: _____ Call sooner if: _____