

## **Health Bill of Rights for Patients**

Ten ideas that empower each of us to embrace being recipients of optimal health care and help us to be discriminating in how we approach ourselves and our experiences within the healthcare system. Created by Elson Haas in collaboration with Bethany Argisle

1. I have the right to make the final decision about what is done to my body.
2. I have the right to be treated with respect by my doctors and the staff in their offices and hospitals, and to have my needs respected.
3. I have the right to inquire about and to receive the best possible information and support about my condition.
4. I have the right to know the benefits and risks of any procedure or tests that I am asked to undertake, and expect support to make the right decisions.
5. I have the right to be informed about the expense for my treatment, tests or procedure, and to know what is covered or not covered by my insurance plan, and to challenge any undue expenses.
6. I have the right to explore and be told about any alternatives to the medically proposed treatments and the risks involved (both in the proposed treatments or alternatives), or to explore this with other experienced practitioners so that I can choose the best possible treatment.
7. I have the right to know and understand what my likely recovery will be for my condition or procedure (and associated costs), as well as the effects of not doing the prescribed treatment.
8. I have the right to be able to interview my doctors before and after any procedures or any proposed treatments (and be willing to pay for the doctor's time for such meetings). I would also like to be paid or provided some benefit in exchange for undue waiting times.
9. If in the hospital, I have the right to nourishing food and water, and am allowed to have my own food and nutritional supplements with me in respectful and appropriate collaboration with my medical treatment.
10. I have the right to bring in family members, (or other advocates) to help both with my decisions/choices about proposed treatments, and to see how they can be included in my recovery along with my active healthcare providers.