

Open-Ended Questions for Medical History

Use open-ended questions to get information quickly, to keep the focus on the patient, and to keep conversation flowing.

- “What brought you in today?” (This can be a good starting question as it may give you clues as to their motivation, whether or not a partner was involved, whether symptoms impacted their decision to receive care and how severe those symptoms may have been).
- “When was the last time you were treated for a sexually transmitted disease?”
- “What other sexually transmitted diseases have you had?”
- “What is your HIV status?”
- “Which anti-retrovirals have you taken?”
- “When was the last time you had a blood test?”
- “When did you last donate blood?” (for syphilis or HIV blood work)
- “How long have you had your symptoms?”
- “Some drugs, like cocaine or heroin, can affect test results. How often do you take drugs like these?”
- “When was the last time?”
- “What kind of drugs have you taken in the past year?”
- “What other prescription drugs are you taking now? Birth control? Antibiotics in the past year?”
- “When was your last period? When was the last time you were pregnant? What are the chances that you are pregnant now? Where are you receiving prenatal care?”
- “What sex were you when you were born?”
- “What gender are you now?”