



## Rehearsal Guide

# Prostate Exam

*Preparing people with intellectual disability/autism (ID/A) to successfully complete a prostate exam.*

## Introduction for Caregivers

A rehearsal guide contains realistic pictures, concrete ideas, and clear, brief instructions for guiding a person through what can be expected in a specific situation. It includes helpful suggestions for caregivers to follow to make the experience meaningful for the person and increase the likelihood of a successful outcome. This approach is beneficial when supporting people with intellectual disability/autism (ID/A) who are anxious about situations such as doctors' appointments, hospitalizations, and medical testing.

A rehearsal guide provides opportunities for the caregiver to assist the person to learn about a specific situation. It contains information on what is needed and why and explains exactly what can be expected. Such a guide is most effective when it is person-centered and used in conjunction with discussion to allow exploration of specific areas of concern. It can be a powerful tool when used as intended.

The expected result is that the person will then experience the situation in a way that supports health and well-being by being prepared and knowing what to expect. The guide can be used at all stages of the situation to facilitate a positive end result.

Thank you for taking the time to use this tool to work with self-advocates to improve their health outcomes.

## How to Use This Rehearsal Guide

For best results, begin to review this rehearsal guide with the person prior to the day of the appointment. Sometimes it will help to review this material with an individual several days or weeks before an appointment; other times, it may be better to wait to review this material until just before the procedure is to take place, perhaps the day before or the morning of the procedure. Together with the individual, determine which will best suit the individual's needs and abilities in understanding the information provided; however, it is important not to wait until 5 minutes before a procedure to introduce this guide to an individual. Give the individual enough time in advance to become familiar with the procedure based on the pictures and information contained on each page and with the individual's abilities in mind.

It is best to review this guide slowly and to focus on one idea/page at a time, allowing the person to talk and/or ask questions after each idea/page is presented. A caregiver may want to share personal experiences related to having this procedure done but be sure to do so in a positive manner, depicting a positive outcome.

## For Best Practices

- ✓ Allot time to review this material when the individual is alert and interested in doing so.
- ✓ Ensure that the setting is free from distraction. Based on the individual's attention span, it may be best to review one page at a time, rather than reviewing an entire guide in one sitting.
- ✓ Explain each picture and practice the suggested exercises with the individual, such as deep breathing, as they appear throughout the guide.
- ✓ On the day of the procedure, take this guide along to continue rehearsing the various steps involved in the procedure.
- ✓ Remain positive, calm, and upbeat.
- ✓ Remember to offer positive reinforcement throughout the procedure. If the procedure is not able to be completed, focus on positive aspects. If the individual seems upset, talk about it later when they are calm to find out how they felt and what could be changed or improved to have a better outcome the next time.

# Introducing the Process

*(Name of individual)*, you are going to have a prostate exam on *(insert date here)* at *(insert name of location)*.

The doctor ordered this test to help keep you healthy.

*(Name of caregiver)* will go with you and stay with you while you have the exam completed.



# In The Waiting Room

When you first get to your appointment, you will have to wait until someone calls your name to see the doctor.

*(Name of caregiver)* will stay in the waiting room with you.

Would you like to take a favorite book along to read or some of your favorite music to listen to on your headset while you wait?



# When Your Name Is Called

A nurse will call your name when it is time to see the doctor. The nurse will tell you what you need to do. The nurse is there to help you.

The nurse will take you to an exam room and ask you to take off your clothes and put on a patient gown before the exam.

It is okay to listen to the nurse, and *(Name of caregiver)* will be right there with you to assist you and make sure that you are okay.



**Note to Caregiver:** You may want to reassure the individual that the dressing/exam room is private. Remember to be patient and to speak in a low, reassuring tone while assisting the individual.

# Before The Exam

The doctor will come meet you in the exam room and may ask you questions before he does this exam.

It's okay to answer the doctor's questions about your private area.

He may ask if you have any problems when you have to go to the bathroom to poop or pee. He may ask if you see any blood when you poop.

It's important to tell the doctor if it hurts when you go to the bathroom.



**Note to Caregiver: Note to Caregiver:** Use the terminology that the individual is familiar with, i.e., poop, butt, rear end, etc.

# How The Test Is Done

First, the doctor might ask you to stand and bend over.

You may be able to hold onto a table, so you won't fall.





# How The Test Is Done

If you are not able to stand for the test, the doctor will have you lie down on the exam table.

You will then be asked to pull your knees up close to your chest, like this person is doing.



## How The Test Is Done

Now the doctor will put on a rubber glove. The doctor will lubricate his/her gloved finger. This means the doctor puts a slippery, gel-like substance on their finger.

The doctor then gently puts that finger inside your bum\* where you go to the bathroom.



**Note to Caregiver:** Remember to use terminology which the person understands, i.e., bum, backside, poop, etc. It is also important to talk with the person about how touching private places is okay when done by a doctor or nurse for a medical exam. Stress that his caregiver will be right there as well if he wants the caregiver with him.

## After The Exam

After the exam you will be able to get dressed. Be sure to tell your caregiver if you have any bleeding afterward. A small amount of bleeding may be normal.

Let your caregivers know if there is a lot of bleeding.



# What You May Feel

You may feel some discomfort. You might feel some pressure as the doctor feels inside of you. It may feel as if you have to pee. \*

It may help for you to take some deep breaths.

Let's practice taking some breaths now. Ready?

Breathe in slowly through your nose. Blow out the air through your lips. Just like blowing out candles on a birthday cake,



**Note to Caregiver:** Again, use terminology with which the individual is familiar, i.e. pee, urinate, etc.

# Great Job! I Know You Can Do It!

Great job!

I know you can do it! Everyone enjoys helping you when you go to your appointments!



**Note to Caregiver:** This is a good place to assess how well the person understood what was presented. Ask some very brief questions such as, “Do you know what will happen when you go to have this prostate exam done?” Revisit the story as often as needed to ensure the person understands and is prepared when the day of the exam arrives.

## References and Additional Resources

- Disabled World. (2020, April 30). Male Prostate Exam: PSA, DRE and PVR Tests. Retrieved on November 14, 2022, from <https://www.disabled-world.com/health/male/prostate-exam.php>
- Kennard, J. (2022, October 7). What is a Prostate Exam? Verywell Health. Retrieved on November 14, 2022, from <https://www.verywellhealth.com/prostate-examination-2329024>



For additional information regarding this guide or any of our physical or behavioral health trainings, contact:

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