



How to Navigate the Healthcare System and Maximize the Patient-Physician Relationship

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Topics for discussion

- Physicians that care for patients with PSC
- General tips
- Clinic visit
 - Who is taking care of me?
 - Tips to maximize your experience in clinic
- Hospital stay
 - Who is taking care of me?
 - Understanding the medical training process
 - Tips to maximize your experience in the hospital
- Questions

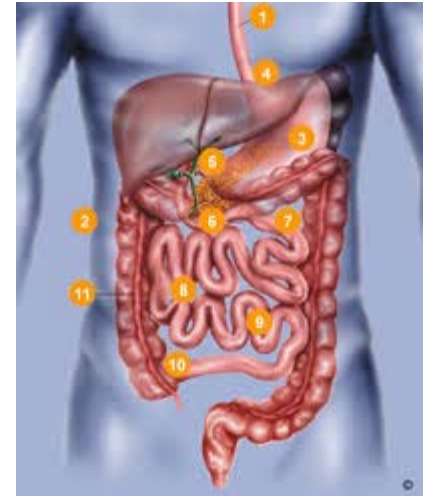
Physicians that care for patients with PSC

- **Primary Care Physician** – oversees care, keep track of subspecialists recommendations
 - In general monitors and treats
 - blood pressure
 - Diabetes
 - Cholesterol
 - General health maintenance and vaccinations
 - **Will probably not be comfortable managing your PSC**

Physicians that care for patients with PSC

Gastroenterologist

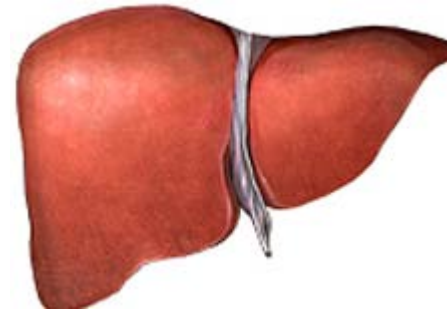
- Specialist of diseases of the “gastrointestinal tract”
 - Stomach
 - Small intestine (duodenum, jejunum, ileum)
 - Large intestine (colon, rectum, anus)
 - Liver
 - Pancreas
 - Bile ducts/Gallbladder
- Can do procedures such as **endoscopy, colonoscopy.**
- May also be trained in ERCP



Physicians that care for patients with PSC

Hepatologist

- Specializes specifically in **liver disease**
- Will manage your PSC, recommend therapies
- Will know when the appropriate time for referral for **liver transplantation** is
- Will care for you before and after liver transplantation
- In some cases may be able to do colonoscopy and/or ERCP

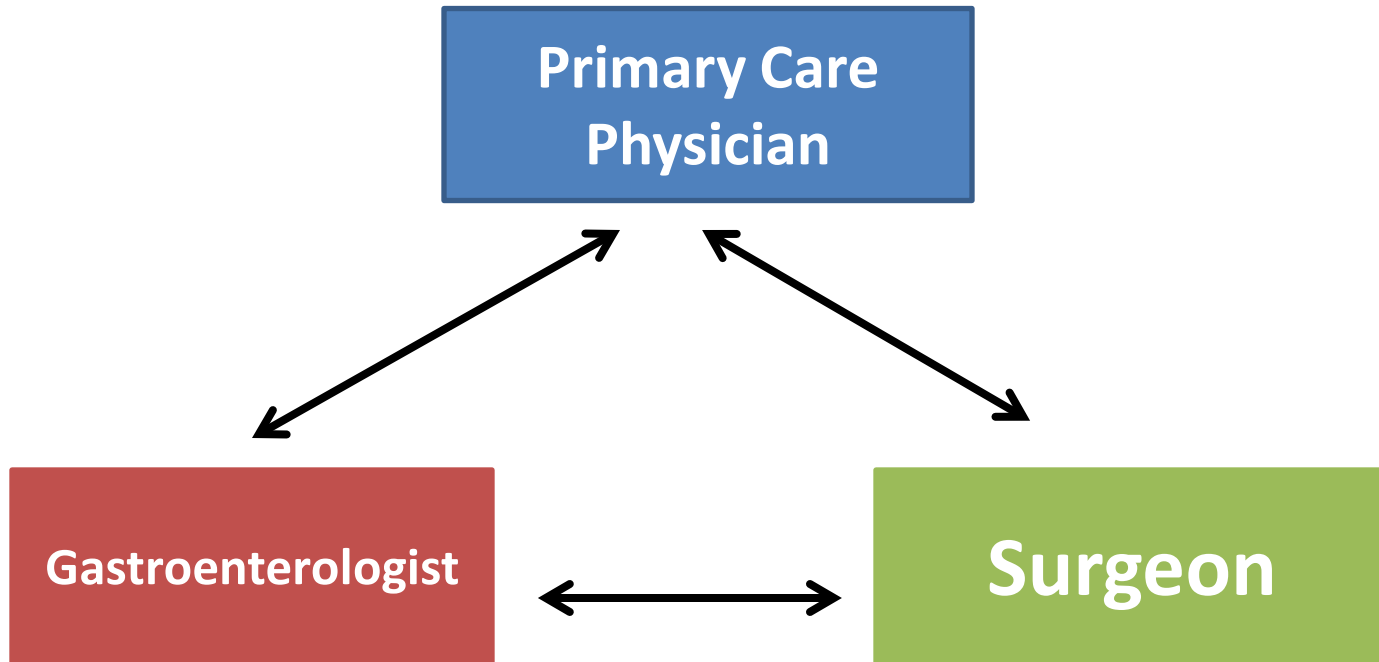


Physicians that care for patients with PSC

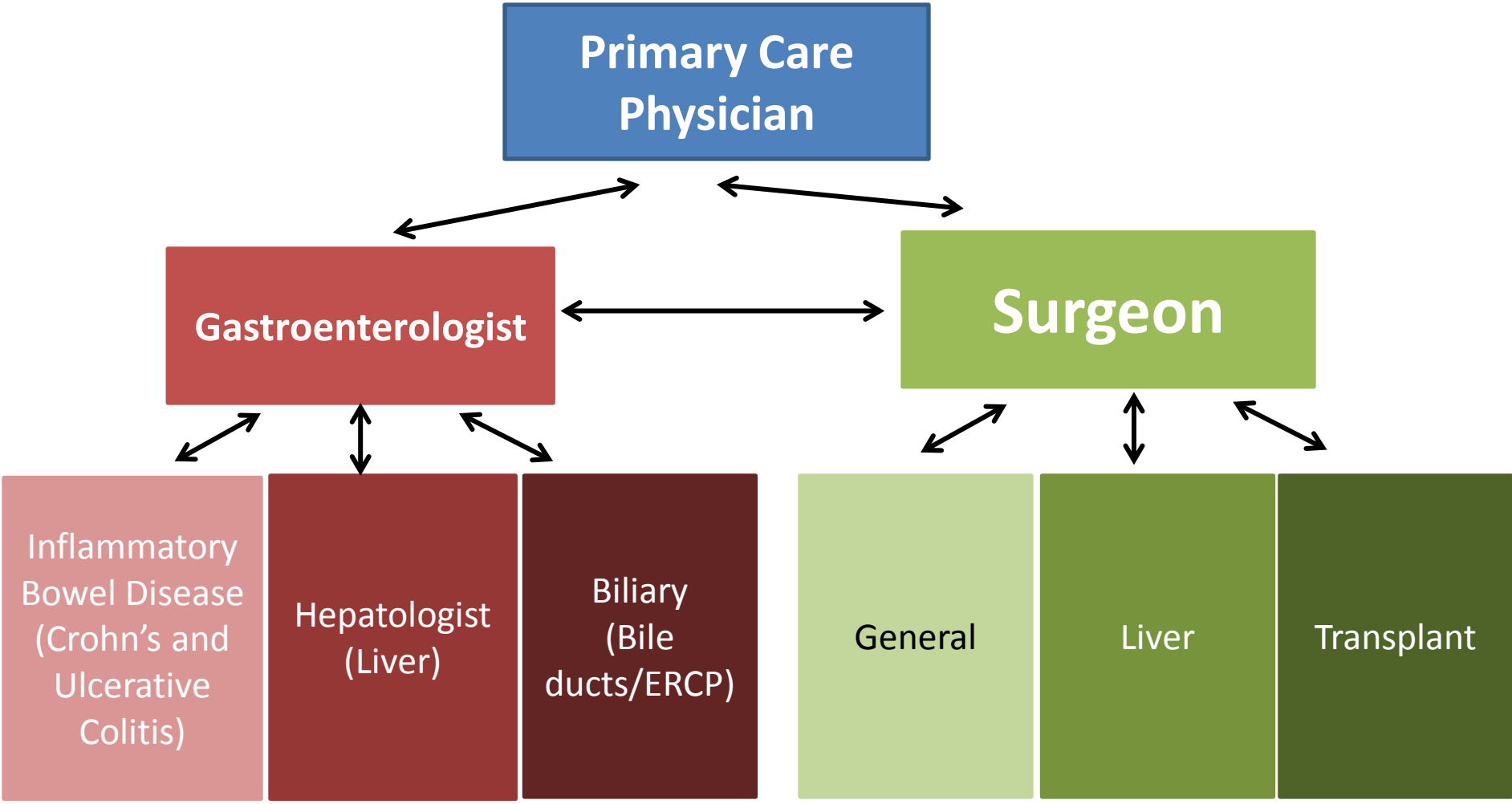
Surgeons

- Trained to do operations
- General surgeons
 - Gallbladder removal
- Transplant surgeons
 - Liver transplantation

Community Physicians



Tertiary Medical Center – large university hospitals



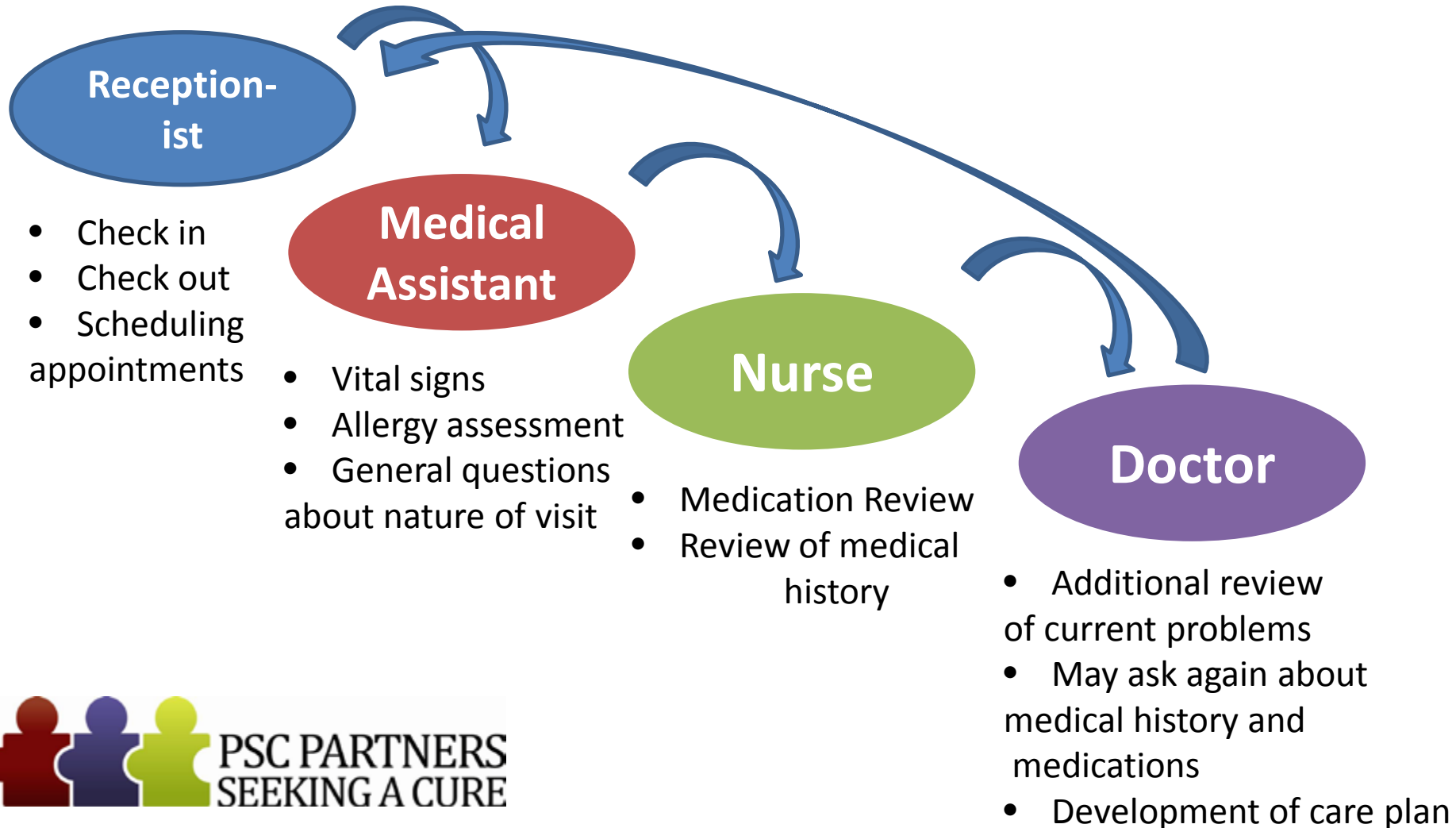
General Tips - **Records**

- Make or obtain a **calendar** so that you can keep track of doctors appointments and take notes
- Keep a list of all **medical problems, procedures (ERCPS, biopsies), surgeries**
- Keep an up-to-date list of your **medications**
- Keep record of **allergies** or prior **adverse reactions to medications**

General Tips - Labs

- Many places have methods for you to review your lab results. Try to **review them** or **obtain copies** of them
 - Consider making a spreadsheet, you can ask your doctor which labs are important for your disease
 - ALT, AST, total bilirubin, alkaline phosphatase, GGT, albumin, INR, platelet count, hemoglobin
 - Doctors often pay more attention to **trends** in labs, rather than exact values

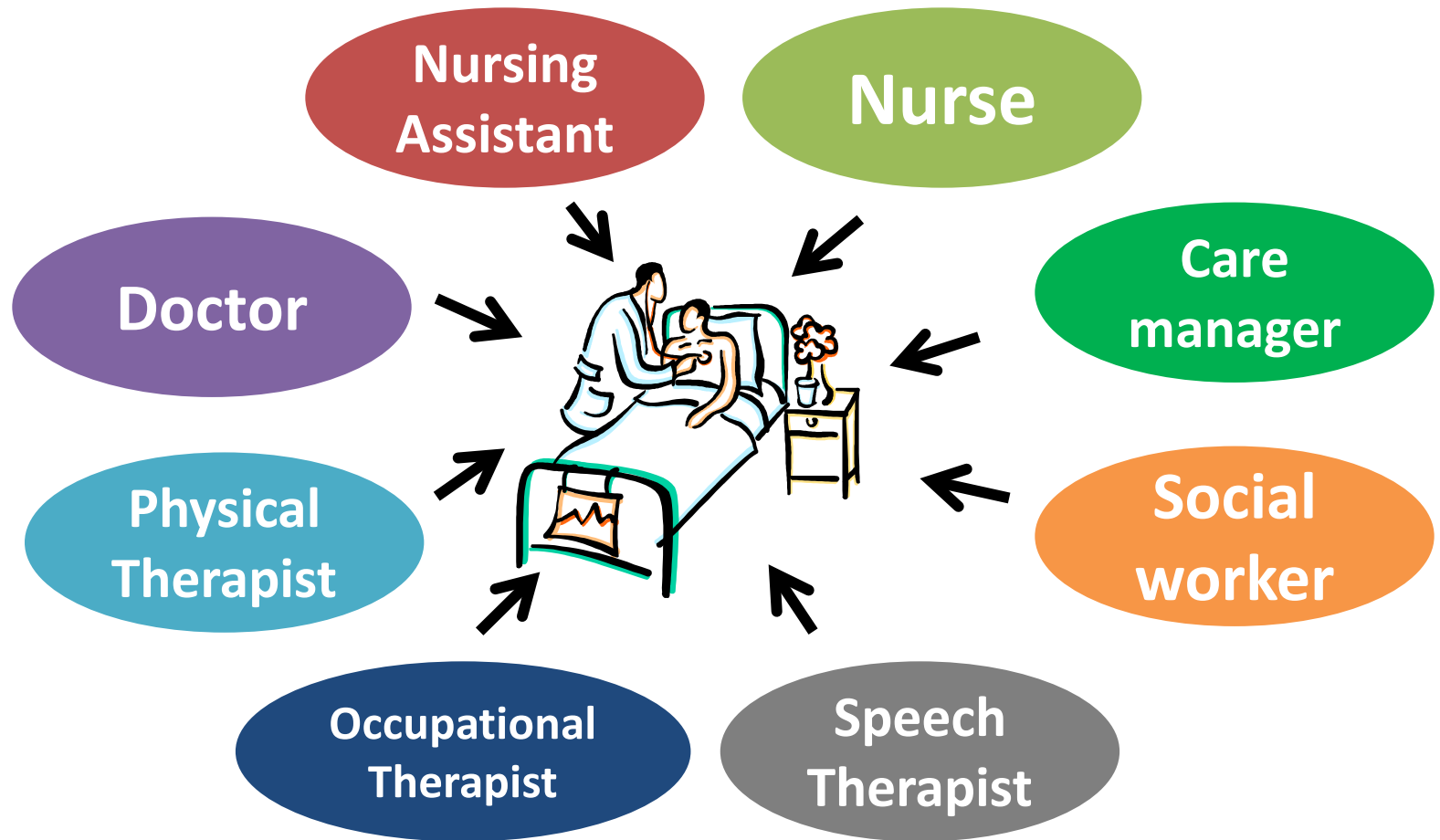
Who is taking care of me? - Clinic



Tips to maximize your clinic visit

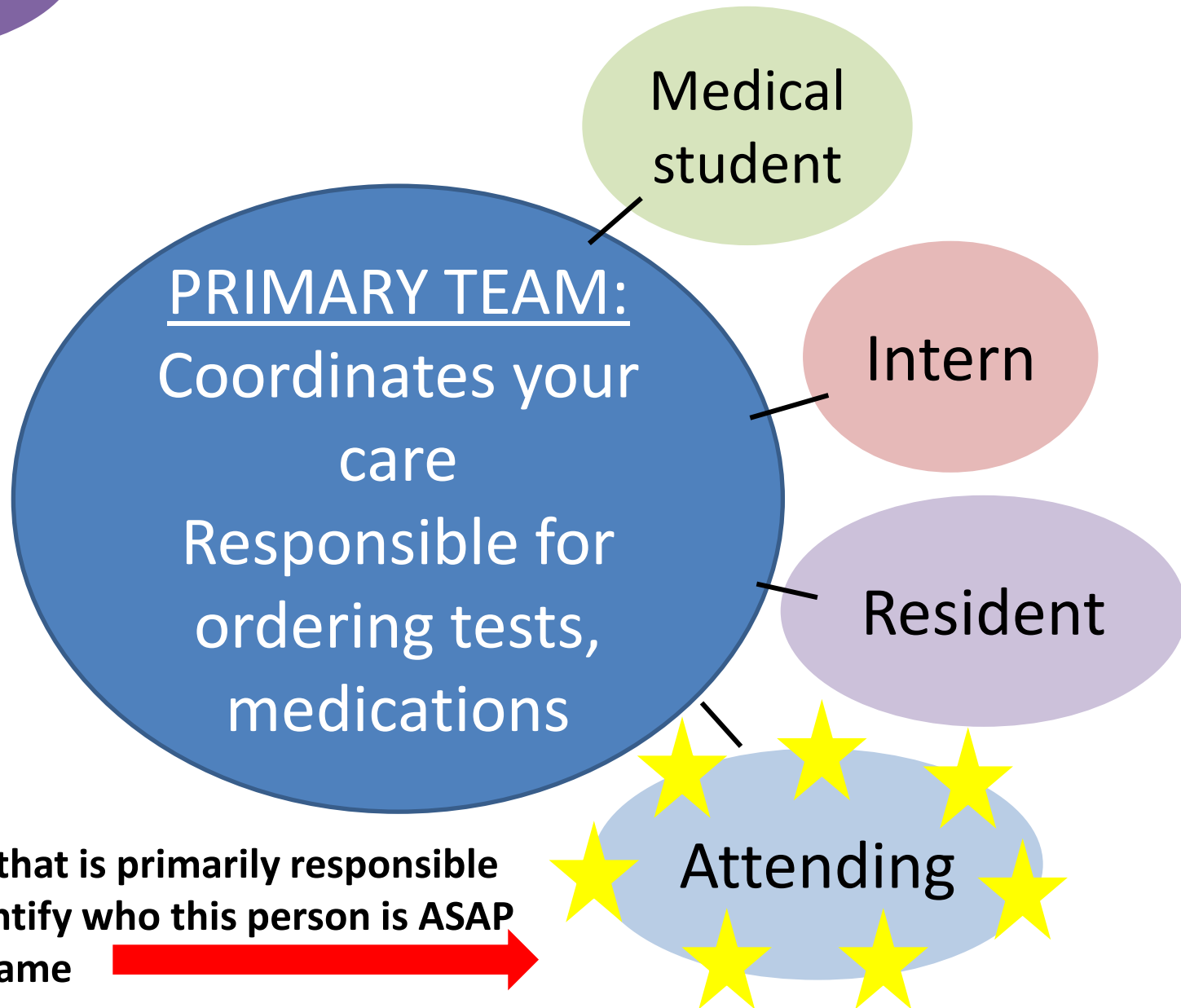
- Obtain important prior records and bring them to the visit – even if your doctor’s office reports that they will send them
- It is helpful to also bring radiology studies on a CD so that the images can be uploaded and reviewed by your doctors

Who is taking care of me - Hospital



Doctor

Who is taking care of me - Hospital



Timeline of medical training

Undergraduate
degree
completion

MD obtained,
Trainee is officially
a "doctor"

Attending
Physician

Medical School
4 years

Intern
1 year

Residency
2-5 years

Training: Subspecialty
Gastroenterology
Cardiology
Infectious Disease

Training: Specialty
Internal Medicine
Pediatrics
Ob/Gyn
Surgery
Radiology
Pathology
Dermatology
Pathology

Fellowship
1-4 years

Attending
Physician

Doctor

Who is taking care of me - Hospital

Consultant A

Medical student

Resident

Attending

Fellow

PRIMARY TEAM:
Coordinates your care
Responsible for ordering tests, medications

Consultant C

Medical student

Resident

Attending

Fellow

Consultant B

Medical student

Resident

Attending

Fellow

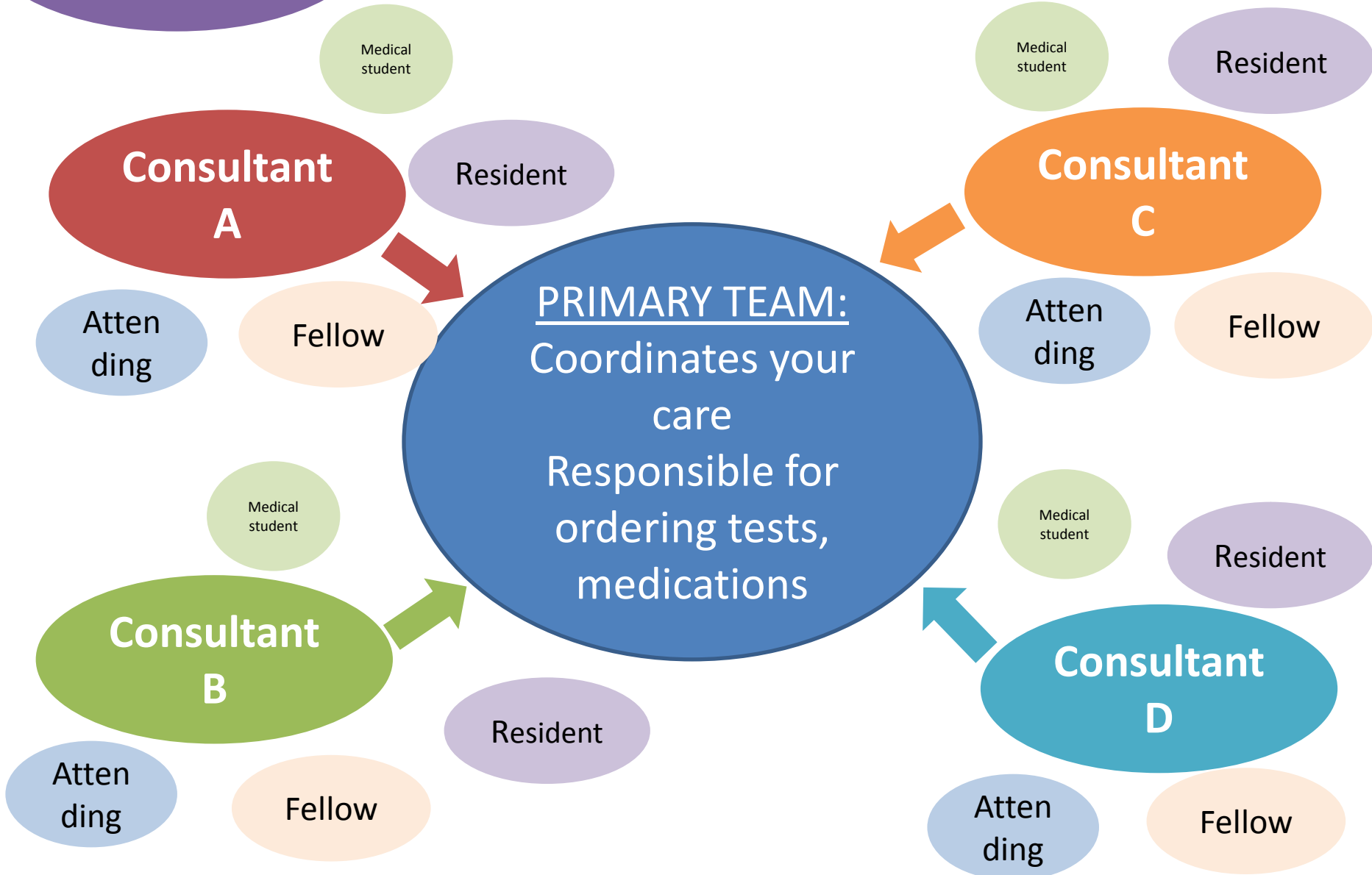
Consultant D

Medical student

Resident

Attending

Fellow



Tips to maximize your hospital visit

- Clarify the **title and role** for anyone taking care of you
- Many people will tell you different things. The **attending physician** of any given specialty has the final word on your diagnosis and plan
 - Understand that medical students and residents are still “learners” and what they tell you generally is correct but might be modified or even changed
- Keep a **list of questions**
- **Do not eat** if you believe that you have a procedure scheduled for that day. It may get cancelled.
- Try to be **flexible in your expectations**. Procedures and radiology studies may be cancelled or delayed if emergencies come in and the team can rarely specify time

QUESTIONS??