

Teachable Moments

Teach Back/Show Back Patient and Family Education Method

The Teach Back/Show Back Method is a teaching technique used to determine the patient's and family's baseline knowledge of a topic. This method can then be used to evaluate the patient's and families' understanding of the material that was taught.

Steps for Teach Back/Show Back:

1. Assess what the patient already knows about the topic.
2. Provide teaching on any new medication, test, skill or treatment.
3. Ask the patient to repeat in his/her own words what you have taught or demonstrate the new skill (see tips below).
4. Identify and correct any misunderstandings.
5. Repeat steps 3 and 4 until comprehension and safety are ensured.

Teach Back/Show Back Questions:

- Use open-ended questions to assess understanding:
 - Don't ask: "Do you understand?" or "Do you have any questions?" or "Do you think you can do this?"
 - Do ask/say: "I want to make sure I explained your meds correctly. Could you tell me, in your own words, what you need to know about this medication?" or "Please show me how you would test your blood sugar at home."
- Consider asking questions such as "If you had to explain what you just learned to your husband, how would you explain it?"

Resources:

1. The Maxwell & Eleanor Blum Patient and Family Learning Center (<http://www.massgeneral.org/pflc/>)
2. Healthstream module:
"Improving your Patient/Family Teaching Skills Through the Teach Back/Show Back Method"

