



What Are My Options?

An Informed Consent Toolkit for Women's Health



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Welcome

Healthcare decisions can be overwhelming especially when you feel unheard. At Mayah's Legacy, we believe that being listened to isn't a privilege – it's a basic right.

Too often, women walk away from appointments confused or sidelined. Whether it's a routine birth plan, postnatal check-up, or menopause treatment, you deserve to know all your options and feel confident to make the decision that's best for you.

This toolkit will help you:

- ◆ Understand what informed consent really means
- ◆ Ask the right questions
- ◆ Spot red flags
- ◆ Speak up with confidence

You don't need to be a medical expert to advocate for yourself. You just need the right tools.





What Is Informed Consent – Really?

Informed consent is more than signing a form or nodding during a rushed explanation. It means you have been given:

- ◆ Clear information about your condition
- ◆ All available options (including doing nothing)
- ◆ The benefits and risks of each option
- ◆ Time to ask questions
- ◆ Freedom to choose without pressure

“Informed consent is a *conversation*, not a checkbox.”

Have I Been Fully Informed? Checklist

Have I been told all my options?

YES NO

Do I understand the benefits and risks?

YES NO

Was I given time to think or ask questions?

YES NO

Do I feel free to say yes, no, or ask for more time?

YES NO

If you answered “no” to any of these, you might not have received true informed consent.





Key Moments You Deserve Full Information On

Birth Plans & Interventions

Questions to ask:

What are all my pain relief options?

What does this intervention involve?

What happens if we wait or do nothing?

Birth Plans & Interventions

Is this medically necessary or a preference?





Can I have time to consider?

What are the short and long-term effects?

Postnatal Mental Health

What support is available?

Are there therapy or community-based options?

Will this affect my ability to care for my baby?





Menopause Treatment

What are the pros and cons of HRT?

Are there lifestyle or holistic alternatives?

What happens if I don't treat symptoms right now?





Fertility Pathways

Is this my only option?

Are there emotional, financial, or physical impacts?

Can I get a second opinion?



The BRAIN Tool: A Decision-Making Framework

When you feel rushed or unsure, use BRAIN to pause and process:

Benefits: What are the benefits?

Risks: What are the risks?

Alternatives: What else could I try?

Instinct: What is my gut telling me?

Nothing: What happens if I do nothing?

Use this tool in real-time during appointments or when reflecting afterward.





Advocacy Scripts & Phrases

Feeling dismissed or rushed? Try these phrases:

- ◆▶ “Can you walk me through all the options?”
- ◆▶ “I’d like a moment to think about this before I decide.”
- ◆▶ “Is this urgent, or can we revisit it later?”
- ◆▶ “That doesn’t feel right for me. Can we explore alternatives?”
- ◆▶ “I understand your recommendation, but I need more information to feel confident.”

Red Flags: Signs You’re Not Being Heard

Subtle or overt signs of dismissal:

- ◆▶ You feel rushed or talked over
- ◆▶ You’re not given time to decide
- ◆▶ You’re told, “This is standard” with no explanation
- ◆▶ You sense your instincts are being brushed off



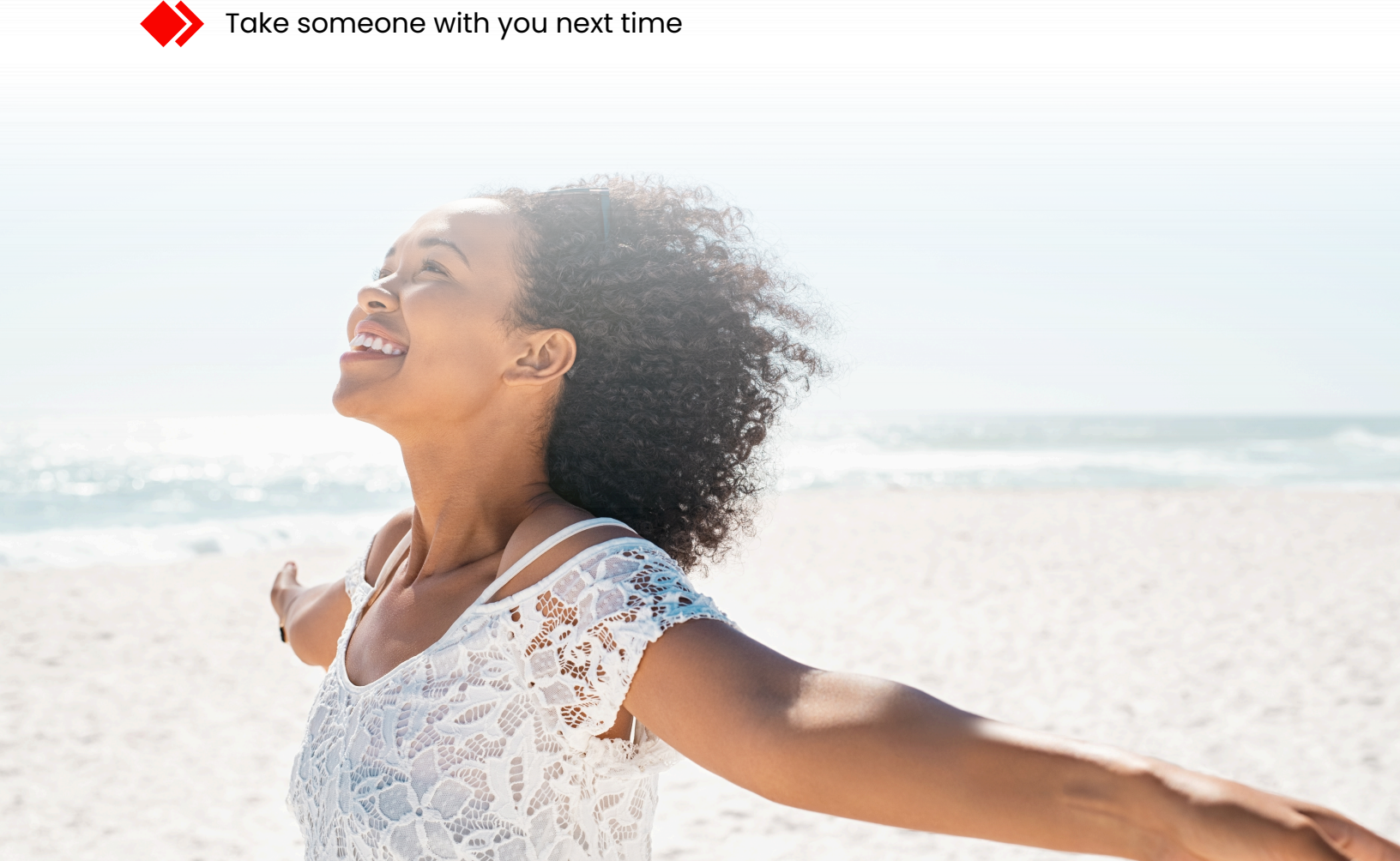


When to speak up:

- ◆◆ If you're confused or unsure
- ◆◆ If you feel pressured or ignored
- ◆◆ If your preferences are not being documented

How to escalate:

- ◆◆ Ask for another clinician
- ◆◆ Request a patient advocate
- ◆◆ Take someone with you next time





Know Your Rights (UK-focused)

Under the NHS Constitution, you have the right to:

- ◆ Be given clear, understandable information
- ◆ Make decisions about your care and refuse treatment
- ◆ Request a second opinion
- ◆ Complain without fear of retribution

Helpful resources:

- ◆ PALS (Patient Advice and Liaison Service)
- ◆ Birthrights UK
- ◆ Mind (for mental health rights)










Silent Supporter Guide

If you're attending a loved one's appointment, your support matters.



You can help by:

-  Taking notes
-  Asking clarifying questions
-  Noticing when she seems unsure

Do not:

-  Speak over her
-  Make decisions for her

Say:

-  "Is there anything you'd like to add?"
-  "Do you feel like your questions were answered?"





Self-Reflection & Confidence Boost

Take a few minutes after appointments to reflect:

What went well?

What do I still need to know?

How did I feel in the room?

Affirmations:



"My voice matters."



"I am allowed to ask questions."



"I have the right to understand before I decide."





You Are Not Alone

Many women have felt confused, unheard, or overwhelmed in healthcare. But that doesn't have to be your story.

At Mayah's Legacy, we offer:

- Downloadable toolkits
- Webinars
- Lectures
- Training for Sister Advocates

Download our full Self-Advocacy Toolkit, and connect with others who get it. You don't have to navigate this alone.

Because when it comes to your health, your voice should shape your care – not be shut out of it.



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