

# Don't Interrupt

On average, it only takes eleven seconds\* before providers interrupt their patients

\*Journal of Internal Medicine

In order to deliver patient-centered care, simply slow down and take a minute to learn about your patients' concerns. If you stop your patient they'll likely re-start their story. If they feel unheard, they'll likely find another provider who listens.

Did you know that patients rehearse what they want to share, so interrupting, even to ask questions or narrow down a diagnosis, can feel rude and disrespectful?

Let your patients tell you how you did



Listened without interrupting

Interrupted while I was talking

Explain to the patient that you are trying to work on your listening skills by not interrupting. At the close of the visit, give the patient a token and tell them to put the coin in the green bucket if they felt you listened well/no interruptions; or the red bucket if they thought you didn't listen well/interrupted. Collect the coins daily and monthly to document trends and improvement.



When we interrupt, we miss details that can lead to misunderstanding and misinterpretation. Both of these can lead to patient dissatisfaction, missed diagnosis and drive higher costs.

## Resist the urge

- Don't interrupt when patients are speaking.
- Whatever you do, DON'T finish their sentences.