

## Shared Decision Making

**Date:** 7/21/2011

Shared Decision Making: How involved is your patient in the management of her own health? Are you providing enough information so that she can make informed decisions about treatment options? Does she even want you to be actively involved or would she prefer to leave that pretty much to you? Shared decision making is a model of patient-provider communication in which providers encourage patients to play a role by providing with them enough understandable information for the patient to become an active player in her own treatment. Somewhat more provider-focused than Participatory Medicine.

Now, that seems pretty straightforward. But it can get pretty complicated and tense all round if there are second language problems between the provider and the patient or if there are health literacy issues or cultural/socioeconomic legacies of distrust between the backgrounds of provider and patient. And occasionally there is reluctance on the part of some providers to surrender the traditional prerogatives and status of the professional that prevailed before the “everybody is now an expert” Internet age.

Wouldn't it be simply great  
If I could just participate  
Get the very best of care  
And treated like I was really there.