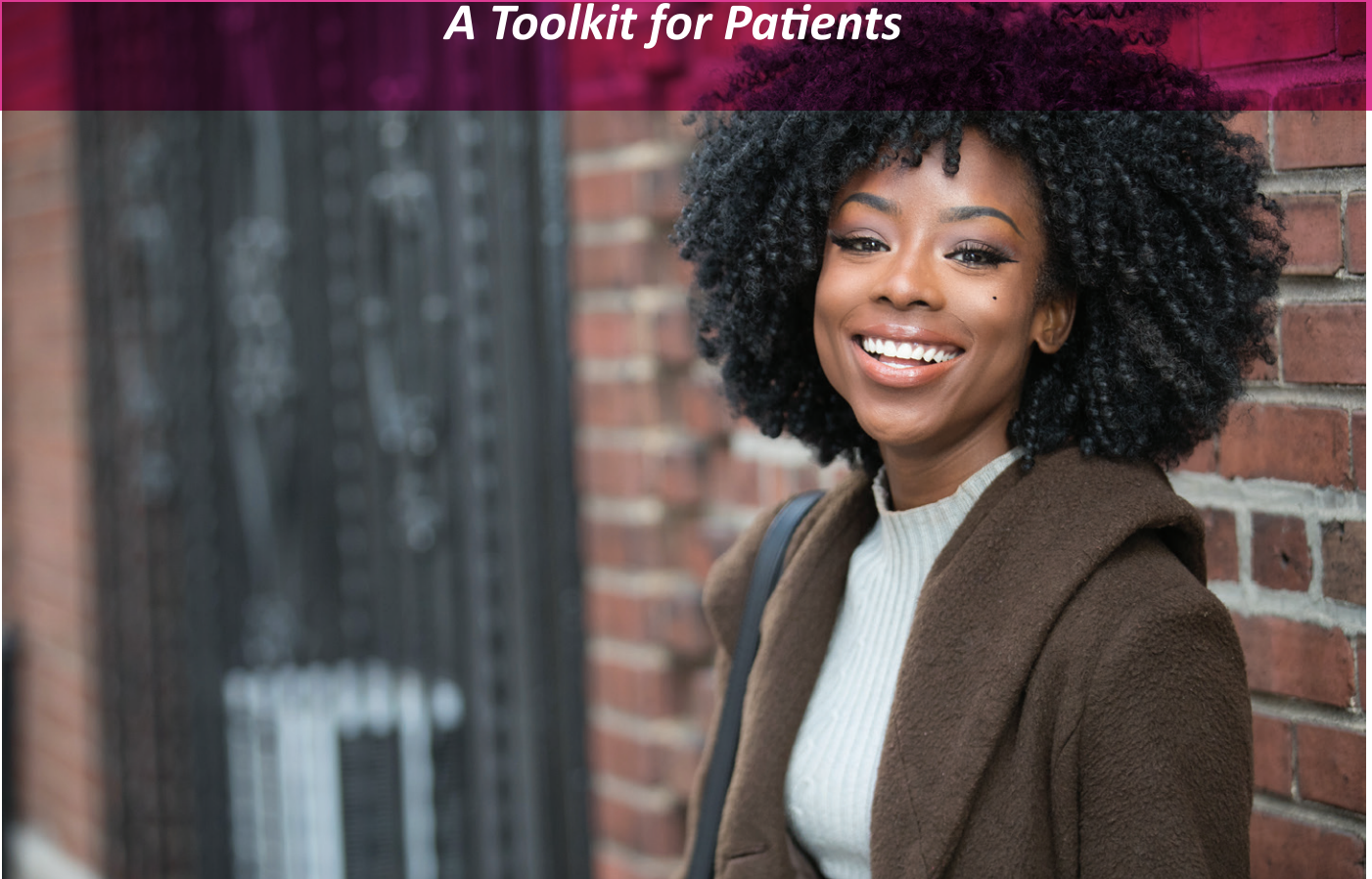


# FEELING SEEN: GETTING CULTURALLY COMPETENT CARE

## *A Toolkit for Patients*



## CREATED WITH YOU IN MIND

*We see you. We hear you. We've got you covered.*

We have witnessed, heard and personally experienced racial challenges specifically for Black women due to systematic racism within healthcare. For these reasons we've carefully crafted this toolkit with you in mind. Although we know that the onus shouldn't be on Black women to get the proper care we deserve, the goal of this resource is to help you get culturally-competent care from providers - care that makes you feel seen and heard.

We want to empower you by providing you with the information that you need ahead of time because knowledge is power, and in this instance, it may be lifesaving. Having all of the information, facts and knowing your rights as a patient are critical to a healthy you.





## WHY IS CULTURALLY COMPETENT CARE IMPORTANT?

As a patient of color, you are entitled to culturally competent care. Culturally competent care are efforts that your medical provider makes to understand themselves and how that may affect you as a patient, all with the lens of culture. Culturally-competent providers understand the physical, mental and cultural needs of diverse patients and are trained to care for diverse populations. You may even want to seek out a Black doctor, someone that looks like you. This often times correlates to better understanding of you as a patient.

## OUR RECOMMENDATIONS FOR YOU

### RED FLAGS AND YOUR INSTINCTS

Learn to recognize when your provider is not culturally-competent. Unfortunately, implicit bias in healthcare is pervasive - if you feel dismissed or not listened to, if you feel that your doctor is not providing you with the same care as people of different racial backgrounds may have received; then do not hesitate to seek out another physician. Advocate for yourself - you're the expert on your own experience. If you feel that someone is mistreating you, trust your gut.

### Know Yourself

It's important to know yourself, your communication style, and how you like to receive information. Knowing this information upfront and communicating your needs to your physician is important. This allows for better communication. If relevant, and only if you feel comfortable, it may be worth mentioning your culture to the doctor so that they are aware. They should be able to take that into consideration when communicating with you.

### Advocate

If you suspect you're not being treated fairly due to your race or background, know that by speaking up, you're defending yourself, but also others who like you could have suffered the same fate. You have several options: you can tell your provider that you feel they're not listening to you, or that the care they're providing doesn't meet your needs. You can also file a formal complaint at the facility and leave. These actions are not mutually exclusive and taking multiple actions from the list previously mentioned may be necessary. No one should feel dismissed when seeking care.



## Research

It is completely okay to intentionally seek out doctors of color, if it makes you feel more reassured. Research has even shown that specific populations, like Black men, report better health outcomes when they have access to Black providers. Representation matters, and at Tigerlily, we understand that.



### Signs that your doctor is not culturally competent

- Your doctor is not listening to your concerns
- You feel stereotyped, misunderstood or judged
- Your doctor minimizes how you feel
- Your doctor lacks a sense of urgency
- Your doctor uses questionable phrases that perpetuate stereotypes (ex: strong black woman)
- Does your doctor care to pronounce your name correctly?
- Is the doctor accommodating to your language needs?
- Is the doctor considering your religious preferences?

## Comfort

70-92% of communication is nonverbal. Therefore be mindful of how doctors communicate with you. Tone, gestures, words, and inclination should all be considered when a doctor responds to you. Think about how you feel and how the doctor makes you feel. See how they react to clothing, scents, religious affiliations, etc.





## QUESTIONS FOR YOUR DOCTOR?

- Do you believe that you provide culturally competent care? Why?
- Do you offer or recommend any culturally competent collateral that highlights Black patients and our needs?
- Have you faced any challenges working with diverse patients?
- Do you speak any languages other than English?
- Have you ever worked with interpreters?
- Do you take cultural competency training? How often?
- What steps have you taken to understand your patients' cultures in the past?
- I don't feel comfortable doing this, are there any accommodations that you can provide to me? (*ex: showing breasts on camera vs in person appointment due to COVID*).



## Sample phrases to use if you feel you are being dismissed by a healthcare professional

- “The reason why I am here is because \_\_\_\_\_, it is affecting me and I am concerned what do you think this might be?”
- “I'm worried that you are not understanding me. Can you please tell me what you think might be wrong?”
- “I am worried because....”
- What do I do if symptoms get worse?
- What else can we do?
- What screenings do you recommend for my age, gender and race?



## WHAT THE LAW SAYS

### A Right to pick your doctor:

You have the right to choose the doctor you want from your health plan's provider network. You also can use an out-of-network emergency room without penalty.

You can choose any available primary care provider in your insurance plan's network. You can choose any available network pediatrician as your child's primary care doctor.



## TIGER TIPS

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***Be honest with yourself.*** You know you best. If you are not getting the care you need or being heard, seek care elsewhere.

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***Track your symptoms.*** To ensure that you are providing the right information to your healthcare provider, track your symptoms and make them clear to them. Provide information like when it started, what it felt like, and how it affects you. Being transparent can help you to get the care that you need. We do recognize that care is a two-way street so this is not entirely up to you but it can be helpful in advocating for your care.

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***Provide feedback.*** If you are still not getting the care you deserve, provide feedback to the doctor or the center. Filing a complaint or providing feedback can help future patients.

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***Seek a second opinion.*** A second opinion is always a good bet. It's great to compare and contrast physicians, offices, and staff treatment when it comes to you and your health

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***You are the expert.*** If your provider does not recognize or respect that, this may be an indicator of a red flag. You have a right to be heard and respected.



## RESOURCES

At Tigerlily we are committed to providing you with the most up to date information along with resources to help you on your journey. We know that this is a challenging time and we want to provide you with resources not only Tigerlily offers, but also our partners. Check out our Toolkit page to find additional resources available to you.