

Pre-Reading Discussion: What happens at the end of a visit with a health professional? Do you usually get instructions to follow? What kind of instructions?

Directions: This passage is about a man named Jose. He visits his doctor for a knee problem, which resulted from an accident. Find out what he needs to do as a follow-up to the visit.

Jose is 53 years old. A few months ago he had an accident. He had been working outside. He was building a small workshop in his yard. He was carrying a load of lumber when he lost his balance. As he fell, Jose twisted his right knee. It hurt like crazy. He could not put any weight on his right leg after that.

Jose had to stay off his leg for about three weeks. His wife got him a pair of crutches so he could get around.

After the accident, his knee was never the same. When he went for a walk or did construction work, it always hurt. Sometimes his knee would suddenly give out on him.

Finally, after four months, he went to see a doctor.

The doctor examined Jose's knee. "I think you may have torn a ligament," she said. "We'll need to do an MRI to be sure."

"What is that?" asked Jose. "An x-ray?"

“It is similar, but an MRI gives us a really good picture of the soft tissue in the body. The machine uses a powerful magnet and a computer,” she explained.

The doctor handed Jose a card. “Call this number as soon as you get home to set up your MRI appointment. The test is done at the hospital.”

“O.K.,” said Jose.

“I am also going to refer you to an orthopedist, Dr. Hopedale. You can call his office in three days to set up an appointment.” She handed Jose another card.

“Who is this again?” asked Jose.

“Dr. Hopedale. He is an orthopedist. An orthopedist is a doctor who specializes in bones, joints and muscles. Dr. Hopedale is very good with knee injury cases.”

“So when will I get to see him?” asked Jose.

“It will take a few days for his office to get the referral paperwork. Call him three days from today to make an appointment. Your MRI results will be sent right to him. He will need them before he sees you. Usually they try to get you in a few days after your MRI.”

“O.K. What should I do in the meantime?” asked Jose.

“Good question. Stay off that leg as much as possible,” she said. “No heavy work or long walks. Just take it easy. And get that MRI a.s.a.p.!”

Questions for Discussion:

Can you relate to Jose's experience?

What does Jose have to do now that he's had the initial doctor visit?