

OASIS · AT A GLANCE

Trauma-Informed Healthcare for Autistic Adults

Why a routine doctor visit can feel like a battle, why the body remembers the last time, and what to bring with you so the next visit is different.

BY JIM PALASTY · OASIS FOR AUTISM · 8 MIN READ

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IN 10 ADULTS

Autistic adults reporting at least one significant negative healthcare experience. The body remembers all of them.

How it works

THREE STEPS

Build the passport

One page. Sensory profile, meds, communication style, consent rules. Print three copies.



Ask the front desk

Quiet room. First slot or last slot. Twenty extra minutes. In writing, not at check-in.



Hand it over before vitals

The tech reads it. The doctor reads it. You stop translating in the middle of an exam.

What lives on the passport

Identity	Name, age, photo, preferred name, key contacts, emergency authorizations
Diagnoses	Autism level, comorbid conditions, severity dates, last hospitalization
Sensory triggers	Lights, sound, touch, smell, temperature, what to dim, what to mute
Communication	Verbal, AAC, written, scripts that work, scripts that do not
Consent	Yes/no signal, narration preference, pause cue, override rules
Meds & allergies	Current list, last dose, what to never give, prior reactions
De-escalation	What works, what does not, exit plan, who calls 911 and who does not

WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE

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The first time we tried a flu shot, three people held him down. He was fourteen. He is twenty-six and he still flinches at that parking lot. We do not get to undo that visit. We get to refuse to repeat it.

KAREN, METRO DETROIT

What matters, at a glance

Restraint, then refusal

Many autistic adults have been physically held down for routine care. The body remembers. The scheduler does not. That is the gap the passport closes.

Sensory profile

Lights. Sound. Smell. Texture. Temperature. Write down which ones flip the switch and which ones help the switch flip back.

Communication style

Verbal, AAC, gesture, picture. Tell them which one your adult uses on a good day, and which one collapses under stress.

Quiet waiting

Ask for a quiet room or the parking lot. Triage by phone. Do not surrender to a lobby that pipes a daytime talk show into every corner.

Consent steps

Narrate every touch before it happens. Stethoscope. Cuff. Light. Otoscope. Earn each yes. A nod counts. A flinch counts louder.

De-escalation plan

Pre-agreed safe word. Pre-agreed exit. Pre-agreed rebooking. Walking out is not failure. It is the plan working as designed.

BRING THESE · CHECK AS YOU GO

- | | |
|--|---|
| ☐ Practice ADA contact name and email | ☐ Written accommodation request, dated |
| ☐ Office reply or non-reply, dated | ☐ Sensory profile attached |
| ☐ Communication plan attached | ☐ Consent script attached |
| ☐ DOJ complaint number, if filed | |

YOUR MOVE

When the office says no, here is what you do

- 1 Ask the front-desk supervisor for the office accommodation policy in writing.
- 2 Email the practice manager with your specific request and a deadline.
- 3 File an ADA Title III request with the practice compliance contact.
- 4 File a complaint with the U.S. Department of Justice ADA hotline.
- 5 Switch practices. Tell the new one why you left. Tell the old one too.

ADA accommodations in healthcare are not a favor. They are federal law.

RESOURCES NAMED IN THIS POST

oasisforautism.com · <https://oasisforautism.com>

Informational only. Not legal or medical advice. Verify current program rules before acting.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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Jim Palasty is the founder of OASIS for Autism and a single father of an adult autistic daughter in Michigan.