

Medication Compliance

GUIDELINES

These guidelines will help you take your medications. Taking your medications properly can make the difference in your health. The table lists some problems that might tempt you to stop taking your medications and some solutions to help you stay on track.

TO TAKE MEDICATIONS PROPERLY

1. Be sure you understand
 - a. Each medication's name
 - b. Why you are taking the medication
 - c. How much medication you should take
 - d. How to take the medication:
 - With meals or on an empty stomach
 - The same time each day
 - The number of hours between dosages
 - e. The side effects
 - f. The side effects (symptoms) you should report to your nurse or doctor
2. Always ask your nurse or doctor about any questions you have.
3. Take your medications exactly as instructed.
 - a. Do not take anyone else's medications.
 - b. Do not take medications you can buy without prescription (over the counter) unless they are approved by your nurse or doctor.
 - c. Do not use alternative medicine or herbal or vitamin supplements unless they are approved by your nurse or doctor.
- d. Follow any special safety precautions, such as
 - Avoid taking aspirin with certain medications
 - Keep your medications separate from other family members' medications.
4. Let your family and friends help you.
5. Ask your nurse or doctor about community groups that may be able to help you.
6. Your nurse can help you with
 - a. Fitting your medication into your daily routine. Try to keep your routine as simple as possible.
 - b. Tips to help you remember to take your medication, such as
 - Using a calendar, grease board, or checklist with the medication times marked,
 - Using an egg carton to arrange medications for the day,
 - Scheduling your medications around usual routines such as meals,
 - Using pictures or colored dots on bottles. For example red dots or a picture of a sun will tell you to take the medication in the morning.
 - Using an index card with a picture of the medication by your toothbrush could remind you to take the medication in the morning and at bedtime
 - Using a medication organizer on the next page, for example

You or your family can fill the organizer for the week.

Problems Encountered with Taking Medications

Problem	Solution
1. You think you do not need the medication because <ol style="list-style-type: none">a. You are feeling better; you do not feel ill.b. You do not understand the reason for taking the medication.	1a. Do not stop taking your medication unless instructed to do so by your nurse or doctor. 1b. Ask your nurse or doctor why the medication has been prescribed for you.
2. You experience side effects from the medication.	2. Tell your nurse or doctor about the symptoms of any side effects you experience.
3. The child-proof bottles are too hard to open.	3. Get a different bottle from your pharmacy.
4. You are tired of taking the medications; your illness has lasted a long time.	4. Talk to your nurse or doctor about how you feel.
5. You do not understand how to take the medication, especially when <ol style="list-style-type: none">a. You must take three or more medications at different times of the day.b. There have been new changes in the medications.c. You must adjust the dosage.	5. Ask your nurse or doctor about ways to remember when to take your medications. Ask your nurse or doctor any questions you have.

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SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
Morn	Morn	Morn	Morn	Morn	Morn	Morn
Noon	Noon	Noon	Noon	Noon	Noon	Noon
Eve	Eve	Eve	Eve	Eve	Eve	Eve
Bed	Bed	Bed	Bed	Bed	Bed	Bed

7. When traveling,
 - a. Carry your medications on your person. Do not put them in your luggage.
 - b. Carry your doctor's name and phone number.
 - c. Carry a list of your medications with you.
- Your doctor may give you a prescription to take with you.

Drug Name	Use	Color/shape	Directions: When and how to take

OTHER INSTRUCTIONS