

Keeping Up With Your Medicines

TAKING MEDICINE AS PRESCRIBED CAN BE A CHALLENGE



Refer to this chart for useful tips.

THE ISSUE	WHAT TO DO
<p>1 I do not think I need medicine.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I feel just fine. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diabetes, high blood pressure and high cholesterol damage your body even when you do not have symptoms. • Do not stop taking your medicine unless you talk to your doctor first.
<p>2 This is too complicated!</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Too many pills! - Too many schedules! - I can not keep track of them all! 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask your doctor if any of your pills can be changed to once-per-day or combination pills (so you take fewer pills each day). • Ask your pharmacist about pill organizers or blister packs. • Bring all of your medicine bottles to your doctor to see if any are no longer needed. • Call 311 or ask your doctor or pharmacist for a “Medication Log” that lists all of your medicines and when to take them.
<p>3 The medicine costs too much.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I cannot afford it. - I will just take less to make it last. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask your doctor if your medicine comes in a lower-cost generic form. • Ask your doctor if you qualify for no-cost medicine. Many people qualify.

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<p>4 I run out of medicine.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I forget to get refills. - I run out of medicine when I am traveling. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask your health plan if you can get up to three months' worth of medicine at once. • Ask your pharmacy or health plan if they have a reminder program or will deliver refills. • Check your medicine bottles weekly to see how many pills are left. When are you close to running out, call your doctor or pharmacist to get refills in time.
<p>5 I just cannot remember to take medicine.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set an alarm to remind you to take medicine. • Leave a reminder by your toothbrush or something you use daily. • Use a daily or weekly pill box to organize medicines.
<p>6 This medicine is not working.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I think it is making me sick. - I feel worse now than I did before. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tell your doctor right away if you have any issues with or side effects from medicine. If your medicine is causing side effects, your doctor can switch you to a different medicine. • Do not stop taking your medicine unless your doctor or pharmacist tells you to.
<p>7 I do not understand the medicine labels.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many pharmacies can print labels in different languages, or larger print, or put pictures on the container.
<p>8 I am embarrassed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I do not want people to know I am taking medicine. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Find a private space at work or home to take your medicine. • Keep medicine in a place only you have access to (but just do not forget where you put them!).