

## Tips for Sticking With Your Meds

It's very important for you to take your medicines the right way. This means taking the right dose of each medicine the right number of times every day. It also means following any special directions, such as taking a medicine with food, on an empty stomach, or at bedtime.

Taking your medicines the right way can help you stay as healthy as possible. For example, taking your full course of medicine for an infection will help you get completely cured. Taking your blood pressure medicine the right way will help prevent heart attacks and strokes in the long run. Taking your diabetes medicine the right way will help prevent problems with your eyes, kidneys, and nerves as years pass.

There are a lot of reasons why it might be hard for you to take your medicines the right way. Be open and honest with your pharmacist or prescriber about any problems you have taking your medicines. They want to help you. They can work with you so you get the most benefit from your medicines. Below are some "road blocks" that might come up, and some useful tips to help you get past them.

### **The schedule for taking my medicines is complicated.**

- Ask if there are medicines you can take just once or twice a day to replace any that you take three or four times a day.
- Ask if there are any pills you can take that combine two or more of your medicines.
- Ask if any of the medicines you take can be stopped.

### **I forget to take my medicines.**

- Ask for help matching your medicine schedule with your daily routines, such as eating meals and going to bed.
- Use a pill organizer.
- Try using technology, such as a reminder alarm or "app" on your smartphone.
- Ask if your pharmacy or the company who makes your medicine has any special programs to help you remember.

### **I have trouble paying for my medicines.**

- Ask if there are options that cost less, such as generics.
- Ask if there are any programs or discount cards that will help you pay for your medicines.

### **I don't like the side effects from my medicines.**

- Ask how long the side effects will last. Some side effects go away after you've been taking a medicine for a few weeks or so.
- Ask what you can do to prevent the side effects or make them easier to deal with.
- Ask if there is a similar medicine that won't have the side effect you don't like.
- If you have an allergic reaction or a very bad side effect, **seek medical attention right away.**

DO NOT stop taking any of your meds on your own. Always speak with your prescriber and/or pharmacist about ANY problems you're having. Then together you can make sure your meds are the best ones for you.

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