

Less than 50% of patients take medications as you prescribe them.



TIPS FOR IMPROVING PATIENT ADHERENCE TO MEDICATIONS

ASSESS

- ❑ Review and update medication regimen at each visit
- ❑ Monitor response to treatment. Consider nonadherence if progress is poor or if member fails to keep appointments.
- ❑ Anticipate and normalize nonadherence. Proactively ask about taking medications: *Many people have trouble taking their medications all the time. To create a medication plan that is safe and effective for you, it is important to know how you are taking your medications. Can we take the next few minutes to talk about that?*

Assess Adherence

1. *In the past 7 days (including last weekend), on how many days have you missed taking any of your doses? OR During the past month approximately what percentage of your medication have you taken?*
 2. *Have you decided to stop or start any medications on your own?*
- ❑ If the patient is taking medications as directed, affirm: *Good for you! Taking your medication regularly is one of the best ways to manage your ____.*
 - ❑ If the patient has missed one or more pills in the past week, build on strengths: *On the days you take your medicines, what helps you stay on track?*

ASSIST

- ❑ Elicit patient's barrier to adherence (see Table 1 for common barriers to adherence) *What gets in the way of taking your medicines on some days?*
- ❑ Encourage patient to verbalize pros and cons of adherence, particularly as they relate to personal concerns and goals
- ❑ Provide education as needed

AGREE

- ❑ Summarize patient's perspective and ask about next steps.
- ❑ Support tailored problem-solving for nonadherence based on patient's actual barrier(s), e.g., Barrier: Member often forgets to take medicines: *There are a number of ways to remember to take medications. They include: using pill dispensers, tying medications to daily habits, involving family, using a watch alarm, keeping written records, and working with your doctor to simplify your medicines. Would one of these work for you, or do you have other ideas?* (see **Table 1. Guidelines for Collaborative Solutions to Promote Medication Adherence**)
- ❑ Collaborate to develop a specific plan. Provide clear instructions on why medication is being prescribed, expected effect, benefits, how and when to take the medication

ADVISE

- ❑ Emphasize importance of taking medication, acknowledge personal choice, and support self-efficacy *I strongly encourage you to take your medications regularly. This is one of the best ways to manage your ____ and to prevent health problems in the future. Of course, the decision to take medications is entirely yours. I am confident that should you decide to carry out the plan we developed today, you can find a way to make it work for you.*

ARRANGE

- ❑ Provide written handouts and/or refer to www.kp.org "Drug Encyclopedia" (11,000 medication instructions in lay terms) and "Pharmacist Question" features
- ❑ Refer for consultation with pharmacist, especially if member is at risk for adverse drug event or on very complex, multi-drug regimen.
- ❑ Refer to appropriate chronic conditions self-management program.

Notes:

- Many of the strategies outlined above can be carried out by members of the health care team, including pharmacists, nurses, medical assistants and others, under the coordination of the physician.
- Studies indicate that clinicians do not demonstrate more than chance accuracy on predicting the medication adherence of their patients. Asking patients about their adherence will detect 50% of those with low adherence with a specificity of 87%. Many patients do not admit to non-adherence and those who do usually overestimate their actual adherence.
- Remember that non-adherence is not a sign of pathology. It is a signal to the clinician to assist the member to explore his/her ambivalence about medication, to provide education and advice, and to support the member in making a decision about self-management. Accurate empathy, non-judgment, collaboration, and support of self-efficacy have all been shown to assist patients in making positive health behavior change.

Adapted from: *Chronic Conditions Self-Management Workgroup Report and Recommendations, May 2003, Care Management Institute, Kaiser Permanente and Regional Health Education Brief Negotiation Resource Manual 2002.*

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REGIONAL HEALTH EDUCATION

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Guidelines for Collaborative Solutions to Promote Medication Adherence

Barrier to Adherence	Guidelines for Collaborative Solutions
Member/caregiver lacks information about their medications, e.g., when, how and why to take them	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Provide Education: Offer clear, specific instructions and handouts ◆ Verify Member’s Understanding: Ask member to verbalize specific medication instructions and provide a return demonstration if applicable (e.g. use of inhaler with spacer)
Member/caregiver states regimen is too complicated or burdensome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Elicit and Acknowledge details of member / caregiver’s perspective ◆ Provide Education as needed ◆ Simplify: Keep overall regimen as simple as possible e.g., less frequent dosing, controlled release forms
Member/caregiver often forgets to take medicines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Build on member’s / caregiver’s strengths: <i>On the days you are successful in taking your medicines, what helps you stay on track?</i> ◆ Elicit member’s barriers to remembering medications <i>What gets in the way of remembering to take your medications on some days?</i> ◆ Elicit member’s ideas for increasing adherence <i>What are your ideas for working around those barriers?</i> ◆ Emphasize Choice: If member does not offer ideas, suggest options <i>Many people find it helpful to use pill dispensers, electronic reminders, or to link taking pills to another activity they do every day. Would one of those work for you or does something else occur to you?</i> ◆ Assist member to create a plan based on the member’s ideas / choice
Member/caregiver concerned about side effects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Elicit member’s / caregiver’s experience with side effects ◆ Offer options for minimizing side effects, changing dose, or changing medication as appropriate ◆ Support member’s choice with educational material, instructions, prescriptions as needed
Member/caregiver doubts their condition warrants the medication / doubts efficacy of medication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Explore Ambivalence <i>What are some reasons for not taking your medicine?</i> <i>What are some reasons for taking it?</i> ◆ Summarize: Begin with reasons for not taking medicine, end with reasons for taking medicine ◆ Provide education as needed ◆ Assess Readiness <i>On a scale from zero to ten, how ready are you to take your medicine regularly ?</i> <i>What does a [number chosen] mean to you? [Listen & Reflect]</i> <i>Why did you choose a [number chosen] instead of a lower number? [Listen & Reflect]</i> <i>What would it take to move you up the scale? [Listen & Reflect]</i> ◆ Summarize: Begin with reasons supporting the status quo, end with reasons for change ◆ Tailor the Intervention – Sample questions <u>Not Ready 0 – 3</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Would you be interested in knowing more about how this medication can improve your health?</i> • <i>How can I help?</i> • <i>What might need to be different for you to consider taking this medication in the future?</i> <u>Unsure 4 – 6</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Where does that leave you now?</i> • <i>What do you see as your next steps?</i> • <i>Where does this medication fit into your future?</i> <u>Ready 7 – 10</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Why is taking this medication important to you now?</i> • <i>What are your ideas for making this work?</i> • <i>What might get in the way? How might you work around the barriers?</i> ◆ Close Summarize, Affirm, Advise
Member/caregiver concerned about costs of medication, either due to co-payment cost or lack of drug coverage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Consider generics or other lower cost medication, if appropriate ◆ Provide information on community-based free or low cost medication programs ◆ If appropriate, refer to subsidy program, e.g., Medicaid, KP Cares for Kids, etc.

Also consider other factors influencing adherence, including depression, cognitive deficits, high member or caregiver stress, lack of family support for treatment, etc., and adapt regimen appropriately