



PROVIDER'S POCKET GUIDE TO MEDICATION ADHERENCE

four steps to help your patients stick to their medication

1. START A CONVERSATION

“What gets in the way of taking your medicine?”

“Do you have any concerns?”

2. USE A MEDICATION LOG

to help patients better understand how and when to take their medication. Visit fulldiabetescare.org to download a medication log, which patients can take with them.

3. PROBLEM-SOLVE WITH PATIENTS

patient: "It's too complicated."

provider: "I'm going to try to simplify your medicine taking routine."

- Can you switch patient to a long-lasting pill?
- Can you simplify the regimen?
- Ask if s/he would agree to try a combination pill, or to work on a lifestyle change.

patient: "I forget."

provider: "Is there something you do at the same time everyday when you could also take your medicine? For instance, when you brush your teeth?"

- Suggest to patients that they use a pill box or cell phone alarm.
- Ask patient whether their pharmacy has a refill reminder system.

patient: "My medicine makes me feel sick."

provider: "Some pills can make you feel worse at first, but the side effects should go away in time."

- Discuss the long-term importance of taking medicine.
- Evaluate dosage and make a change to reduce side effects, if possible.

- Tell patient not to feel discouraged if s/he doesn't feel better right away.
- Explain possible side effects, and how they should respond to them.
- Suggest ways the patient can take the medicine that will reduce nausea (e.g., with food) or dizziness (e.g., before bed), if applicable.

patient: "Medicine costs too much."

provider: "Cost is a huge problem. There may be some ways to make prescriptions more affordable."

- Can you switch patient to a generic?
- Write a 90 day or longer prescription, if possible.
- Does patient require every medicine that s/he has been prescribed?
- Provide information on low cost or generic prescription programs or low cost pharmacies.

patient: "I don't feel sick."

provider: "I'm glad you are feeling well. But many silent diseases, like diabetes can put you at risk for heart attack or stroke."

- Remind patient how their disease affects the body. Make sure the patient understands.
- Remind the patient that the medicine will help prevent future illness or complications.

4. CONNECT PATIENTS TO THE CARE TEAM

Identify someone on your team that patients can easily contact with questions about taking their medicine.

Guidelines provided by the New York City Department of Health & Mental Hygiene

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