



The Importance of Taking Your Medication

Taking your medication is an important part of your treatment. Not taking your medication can lead to a setback. This can cause repeated and longer admissions to the hospital, and a longer recovery time. Here are some reasons why some people do not take their medication:

- The illness may cause you to believe you are not sick and do not need medication.
- You may want to stop taking the medication because of the side effects.
- It may be hard to keep track of the amounts, times and your different medications. This is especially true if you are having trouble concentrating.
- You may believe you no longer need medication when you start to feel better and your symptoms go away.
- You may want to drink alcohol and/or use drugs and feel that you should not mix them.
- You may not be able to afford the medication.

If these issues concern you, please talk to your doctor or nurse. We will help you deal with these issues.

Tips to Help You Take Your Medication

- Give your medication a chance to start working before giving up. This can take 6-8 weeks or more.
- Talk to your doctor and nurse if you are having any side effects. They can usually be dealt with and some go away completely after a short time.
- Ask your doctor to prescribe your medication all at once if possible or in 2 doses.
- Ask your nurse to teach you how to use a weekly pill box.
- Take your medication at the same time each day, as part of a daily routine.
- Talk to your doctor or nurse about alcohol and drug use.
- Try to imagine the benefits of being well and staying out of hospital. Relate these benefits to taking your medications.
- Reward yourself for taking your medication.

Adapted from: Encouraging Medication in Learning About Schizophrenia: Rays of Hope by: Susan Charlton RN, BScN & Elizabeth Emberly RN, BScN (CDMHP, 2003)

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