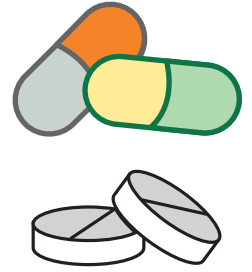


How to Follow Your Treatment Plan

- Medicines can help your brain and body feel better, but only if you take them the right way
- They can help you feel better and stop things from getting worse
- If you skip a dose or stop suddenly, you might feel sick or have problems



Tips for Taking Your Medicine the Right Way



Make It a Routine

- Pair taking your medicine with a habit that happens just as often as you have to take your medicine (like brushing your teeth with daily medicines)
- In your calendar or phone, make a note of taking your medicine so you know you took it



Use Reminders

- Set a phone alarm, use a pillbox, or put a sticky note on the fridge or on your bathroom mirror to remind you
- Some apps can track doses and send you alerts



Talk to Your Health Professional

- Ask questions like: “What is this medicine for?” or “Will it cause problems?” or “How long will those problems last?”
- Tell your health professional if a medicine costs too much or makes you sick



Learn About Your Medicine

- Learn the name of your medicine, what it’s for, and how to take it
- Write down any problems you notice and tell your health professional
- Be patient: The first medicine might not work for you; your health professional can help you find one that works better



Plan Ahead

- Refill your medicine before you run out—don’t wait until the last minute
- You may sometimes have to go in for a check-up with your health professional before you can get a refill; talk to your health professional to see if you can get 3-month refill (90-day supply) instead of monthly (30-day supply)
- Take your medicine with you when you travel



Notice the Positives

- Are you feeling less tired? Sleeping better? Worrying less?
- Pay attention to how you feel—small changes are important
- Over time, you can start to feel better and better



How to Follow Your Treatment Plan

Things You Should Avoid

AVOID



Sharing
medicine



Not telling your health professional about problems you have with your medicine

Letting shame stop you from getting help



Stopping your medicine when you feel better



- **Stopping when you feel better:** Feeling better means the medicine is working. Don't stop taking it without talking to your health professional first. Stopping without talking to your health professional can be unsafe.
- **Sharing medicine:** Medicine is made for your body and your needs. Never take someone else's medicines, even if they have the same condition.
- **Not telling your health professional about problems with your medicine:** This is a great time to get your health professional's help and advice. They are here to help you feel better.
- **Letting shame stop you:** Taking medicine for mental health is just as important as taking it for blood pressure or diabetes. You're taking care of yourself, and should be proud of that.

Wrong Ideas People Often Believe About Medicines

"Once I start taking this medicine I will be on it for forever."

TRUTH: Maybe not! Some medicines are for the short term. Others are for the long term. Your health professional will help you decide when it's safe to stop.

"If I miss one dose I might as well stop taking it."

TRUTH: Take it as soon as you remember, unless it's almost time for the next one. Don't double up unless your health professional says it's okay.

"I can't take this medicine because I am on another medicine."

TRUTH: Always tell your health professionals what you're taking. They can check for problems and help you stay safe.

When to Talk to Your Health Professional

- If you feel worse instead of better
- If you get new problems or feel really sick; this might mean you need a different medicine
- If you can't get your medicine because it's too expensive or something changes

