



For Patients



♥ Tips for Sticking with your Treatment

Research has shown that people who adhere to their healthcare provider's recommendations live longer and healthier lives. So, here are some tips to help you follow your healthcare provider's orders.

♥ Tips for Taking Medications:

- Know the purpose of your medication, possible side effects, and what to do if they occur.
- Understand how and when you are supposed to take your medication.
- Maintain a schedule. Take medication along with meals (if advised) or other daily events, like brushing your teeth.
- Put a sticker or reminder note on your medicine cabinet or refrigerator.
- Buy pill containers that beep when it's time to take your medication.
- Make an instruction sheet. Tape a sample of each pill you take on a sheet of paper and write down all the information about each pill next to it.
- Color-code your medicine bottles with labels to simplify your routine. For example, blue bottles can be for morning, red for afternoon, and yellow for bedtime.
- If your medications are too expensive, ask about less expensive options.
- If your regimen is too complex, ask if it can be simplified.
- If you will be away from home, make sure you carry enough of your medication with you. Also, carry the phone number of your healthcare provider and pharmacy.
- Know the risks of taking the medication and the risks of NOT taking the medication.

♥ Tips for Improving Lifestyle:

- Focus on the process, not just the outcome. Small improvements every day add up!
- Remember why you are making positive lifestyle changes by using reminders (on mirrors or the refrigerator).
- Learn to read food labels. If you learn how much fat, salt, and other ingredients are in your diet you may be more successful in making healthy choices.
- Keep an exercise diary. When you see your successes written down, it will encourage you to continue exercising.
- If you're having trouble quitting smoking, ask about smoking cessation drugs and counseling.
- Remember that you don't have to make all of your changes at once.
- Be an active partner with your healthcare provider in making treatment decisions and addressing barriers that keep you from meeting your goals.
- Find a partner in prevention that can support you in meeting your goals.
- Reward yourself (in a healthy way) for effort and success.

