

# Keeping Up With Your Medicines

## TAKING MEDICINE AS PRESCRIBED CAN BE A CHALLENGE



Refer to this chart for useful tips.

THE ISSUE	WHAT TO DO
<p><b>1 I do not think I need medicine.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I feel just fine.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diabetes, high blood pressure and high cholesterol damage your body even when you do not have symptoms.</li> <li>• Do not stop taking your medicine unless you talk to your doctor first.</li> </ul>
<p><b>2 This is too complicated!</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Too many pills!</li> <li>- Too many schedules!</li> <li>- I can not keep track of them all!</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask your doctor if any of your pills can be changed to once-per-day or combination pills (so you take fewer pills each day).</li> <li>• Ask your pharmacist about pill organizers or blister packs.</li> <li>• Bring all of your medicine bottles to your doctor to see if any are no longer needed.</li> <li>• Call <b>311</b> or ask your doctor or pharmacist for a “Medication Log” that lists all of your medicines and when to take them.</li> </ul>
<p><b>3 The medicine costs too much.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I cannot afford it.</li> <li>- I will just take less to make it last.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask your doctor if your medicine comes in a lower-cost generic form.</li> <li>• Ask your doctor if you qualify for no-cost medicine. Many people qualify.</li> </ul>

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<p><b>4 I run out of medicine.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I forget to get refills.</li> <li>- I run out of medicine when I am traveling.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask your health plan if you can get up to three months' worth of medicine at once.</li> <li>• Ask your pharmacy or health plan if they have a reminder program or will deliver refills.</li> <li>• Check your medicine bottles weekly to see how many pills are left. When are you close to running out, call your doctor or pharmacist to get refills in time.</li> </ul>
<p><b>5 I just cannot remember to take medicine.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set an alarm to remind you to take medicine.</li> <li>• Leave a reminder by your toothbrush or something you use daily.</li> <li>• Use a daily or weekly pill box to organize medicines.</li> </ul>
<p><b>6 This medicine is not working.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I think it is making me sick.</li> <li>- I feel worse now than I did before.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tell your doctor right away if you have any issues with or side effects from medicine. If your medicine is causing side effects, your doctor can switch you to a different medicine.</li> <li>• Do not stop taking your medicine unless your doctor or pharmacist tells you to.</li> </ul>
<p><b>7 I do not understand the medicine labels.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Many pharmacies can print labels in different languages, or larger print, or put pictures on the container.</li> </ul>
<p><b>8 I am embarrassed.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I do not want people to know I am taking medicine.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Find a private space at work or home to take your medicine.</li> <li>• Keep medicine in a place only <b>you</b> have access to (but just do not forget where you put them!).</li> </ul>