

# Medication Adherence Guide

Taking medication as prescribed is crucial for managing chronic conditions, preventing complications, and improving overall health outcomes. Many patients struggle with adherence due to forgetfulness, side effects, misunderstanding instructions, or complex dosing schedules.

## 1. Commonly Prescribed Medications

Metformin is widely used to control blood sugar levels in type 2 diabetes. It works by reducing glucose production in the liver and improving insulin sensitivity. Common side effects include nausea, diarrhea, and abdominal discomfort, especially when starting the medication. These symptoms often subside over time. Metformin should be taken with meals to reduce gastrointestinal effects.

Lisinopril is an ACE inhibitor used to treat high blood pressure and heart failure. It helps relax blood vessels and improve blood flow. Patients may experience a persistent dry cough, dizziness, or elevated potassium levels. Rare but serious side effects include angioedema (swelling of face or throat). Always report breathing difficulty or swelling immediately.

Atorvastatin is prescribed to lower cholesterol levels and reduce the risk of heart attack and stroke. Muscle aches and mild liver enzyme elevations are the most common side effects. Liver function tests should be monitored regularly. Avoid grapefruit juice, as it can interfere with how the drug is metabolized.

## 2. What to Do If You Miss a Dose

If you miss a dose of your medication, take it as soon as you remember. However, if it's close to the time of your next scheduled dose, skip the missed one—do not double up. For medications like insulin or blood thinners, missed doses can be serious and should be reported to your doctor. Logging missed doses helps identify patterns and allows proactive intervention by healthcare providers or digital assistants like MediMimes.

## 3. Improving Adherence

To enhance adherence, patients should use strategies such as:

- Setting alarms or app reminders
- Linking medication times with daily habits (e.g., brushing teeth, meals)
- Using pill organizers or blister packs
- Keeping medications in visible, safe locations
- Involving family members or caregivers for support
- Understanding the importance of each medication

Patients who understand the purpose and benefit of their treatment are significantly more likely to adhere. Digital tools that track missed doses and send personalized nudges have shown to improve consistency.

#### 4. Managing Side Effects

Most side effects are mild and go away over time. However, patients should be encouraged to report symptoms like rashes, difficulty breathing, palpitations, or severe nausea immediately. Never stop medication suddenly unless advised by a doctor. Drinking plenty of water and taking medication with food may reduce stomach-related side effects.

#### 5. Drug Interactions and Safety

Always inform your doctor or pharmacist about all medications, including over-the-counter drugs and supplements. Some drugs can interact dangerously. For example, NSAIDs like ibuprofen may reduce the effectiveness of blood pressure medications and increase bleeding risk with blood thinners.

#### 6. General Advice

Always follow the prescribed dosage and schedule. Skipping doses or stopping treatment early may lead to resistance (in antibiotics), worsened symptoms, or long-term damage. Use digital tools to stay on track. If you're ever unsure about what a medication does, how to take it, or its side effects, consult your healthcare provider—or ask MediMimes for general guidance.

Remember: The right medication, at the right time, in the right dose, can save lives.