

Medicines



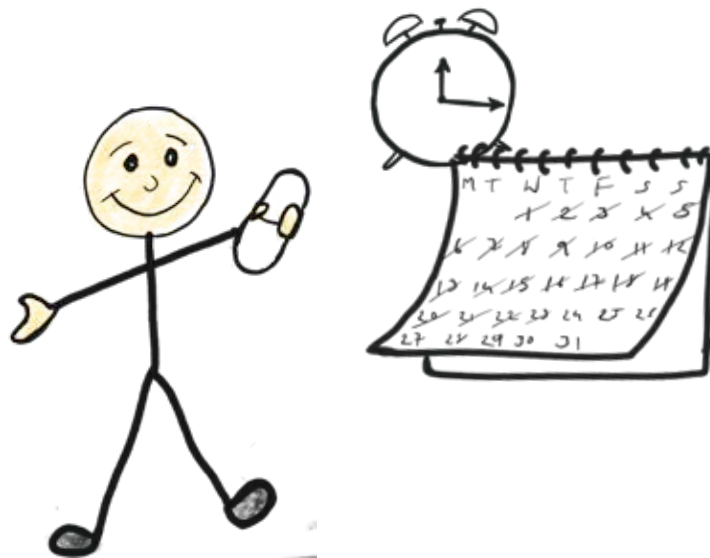
Mental illness is just like any chronic physical illness such as diabetes, blood pressure etc. Just like the treatment of any chronic physical illness, the treatment of mental illness requires long-term medication.

Adherence to medication and regular follow-ups with your treating doctor help in improving symptoms.



What is Medication Adherence?

- Taking your medication regularly as prescribed by your doctor.
- Taking the correct dose of your medication on time and at correct intervals.
- Not skipping doses in between.



What are the benefits of Medication Adherence?

- Reduction in symptoms.
- Makes you feel better.
- Improves your ability to interact with friends and family members.






- Improves your functioning in day-to-day activities.
- Helps you do your job.
- Reduces the risk of recurrence of symptoms.
- Reduces the possibility of future hospitalization.

What is “Poor Medication Adherence”?

- Not taking the prescribed medication on time and at correct intervals.
- Not taking the correct dose as prescribed by the doctor (such as one tablet or half tablet).



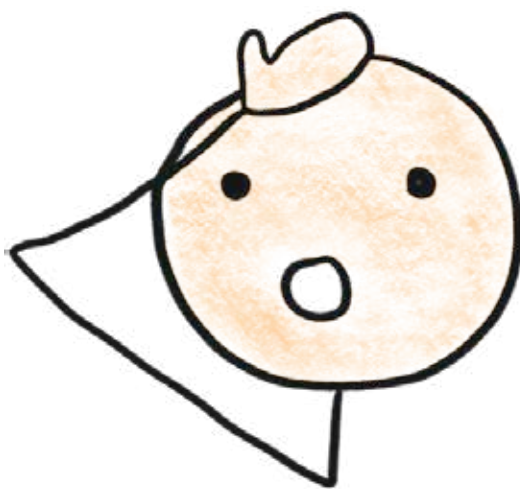
What are the harms of poor medication adherence?

- No improvement in symptoms.
- Worsening of symptoms with time. 
- Recurrence of symptoms which had improved in the past.
- Inability to do daily activities.
- Disturbance in functioning. 
- Inability to interact with friends & family members properly.
- Argument with family members & friends. 
- Not able to do your job or loss of job.
- Increased risk of hospitalization.

Why does poor medication adherence occur?

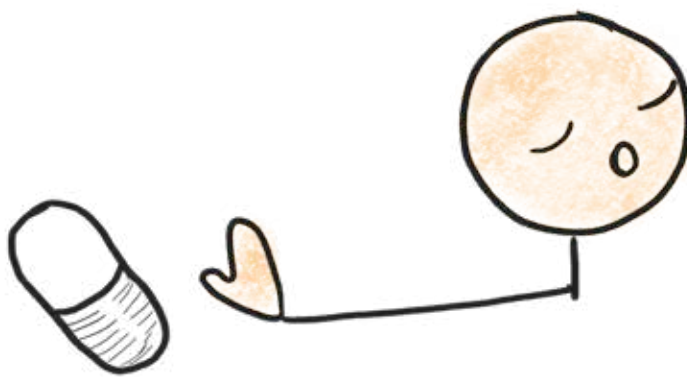
1. Intentional decision to miss/stop medication:

- Myths and misconceptions.
- Bothered by side-effects.
- Inability to procure medicines (due to lack of money, lack of information about where to buy them etc).



2. Unintentional Interruptions:

- Patient is not fully informed about how to take medication.
- Forgot to take medication.
- Forgot to procure medication on time.
- Forgot to follow-up with the doctor.



Common Myths & Misconception_s

Myth 1:

Medications are addictive or habit-forming and the patient will become dependent on the medicines.

Fact:

Medications prescribed by the doctor are not habit-forming. However, a correct regimen has to be followed for increasing or decreasing the doses. This can be explained clearly by your treating doctor.



Myth 2:

Medications are harmful in the long term.

Fact:

Medications prescribed are safe when taken as per the instructions of the doctor. They will help in the improvement of symptoms. Few side-effects may occur, but they can be tackled. Your doctor can suggest alternatives or solutions for dealing with the side-effects like adjusting the doses, changing to a different medication etc.



Misconception 1:

My medicines are not helping me feel better.

Fact:

Medicines sometime take longer to act and must be taken regularly for them to be fully effective.

Treatment for schizophrenia is long-term, and continued adherence to medicines helps in improving the symptoms and functional recovery.

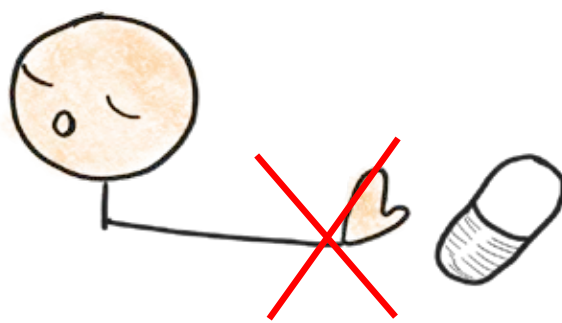


Misconception 2:

I am feeling better, I do not need to take medicines anymore.

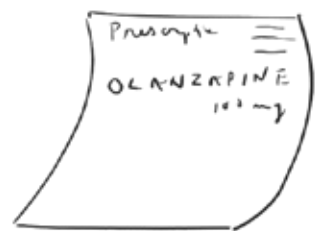
Fact:

Do not stop the medicines on your own, even if you are feeling better. Discuss with your doctor before making any changes to your medication. Stopping your medicines on your own, without consulting your doctor, can be harmful.



What are the steps to improve Medication Adherence?

1. Understand the names of the medicines prescribed to you. If you have any doubts, ask your treating doctor before your consultation ends.



Tip: Request your doctor to write the names in CAPITAL LETTERS.



2. Understand clearly from your doctor about the correct dose and time of taking your medication.

Tip: Request your doctor for written instructions in simple language, if required.



3. Ask your doctor about the common side-effects from the medication and what to do if they occur.

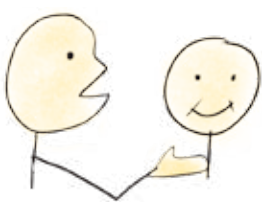
4. If you experience side-effects, which you find problematic, visit your doctor as soon as possible. Don't stop the medication immediately. There are alternatives available for dealing with side-effects.

5. Fix the time for taking medication.

Tip: Pair it with routine activities like taking meals.



6. You can use simple devices like alarm clock or mobile phone to set alarms at the time of taking medication.



7. Ask a family member to remind you about taking medicines. You can use a pill box for storing doses.

8. Go for regular follow-ups as advised by your doctor.

9. Make sure you have adequate stock of medication. Refill before your stock is completely over.



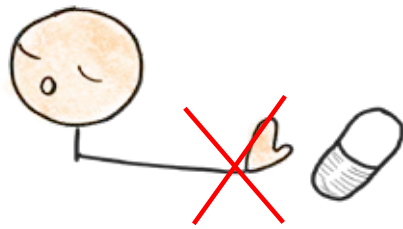
Tip: Each day after taking your medicines, make sure you have adequate stock, if not, then refill your stock immediately.



10. In case your doctor increases or decreases the medication dosage, make sure you understand the instructions clearly.

11. Continue taking medication in the same dosage if you are unable to go for follow-up.

12. If you have any doubts or queries about your medication, feel free to ask your doctor regarding the same. Do not stop the medication.



13. If you are unable to procure medicines due to any reason (such as lack of funds, no medicine shops in your vicinity, lack of supply for a particular medicines etc.), make sure to discuss these issues with your treating doctor. It will help your doctor to look for and suggest alternatives.



14. Avoid harmful addictive substances (such as alcohol, tobacco, cannabis).