



## Barriers and Tips Report

# Taking Medicines: What Gets in Your Way

## Get Help Staying on Track

Based on your answers, these barriers have been identified as what gets in the way of taking your medicine. Here are tips that may help you with these barriers. Print and take this report to your doctor or pharmacist, who can help you get back or stay on track.

## Lifestyle: Living With Your Medical Condition

### 1. I just forget to take my medicines some of the time.

#### > Think about it

- What do you have to do every day? Like brushing your teeth, shaving, or eating a meal.

#### > Tips

- Use a pill box marked with the days of the week.
- Set your watch or alarm for pill-taking times.
- Take your pill box with you when you are away from home.
- Stick a reminder note on your bathroom mirror.
- Keep your medicine in a place where you will see it daily.

### 2. I run out of my medicine because I don't get refills on time.

#### > Think about it

- How do you track other reminders and appointments?

#### > Tips

- Add medicine refills to your "To Do" list.
- Plan ahead for refills. For example, mark a calendar with "Refill on [date]."
- Pick up refills the week before your medicine runs out.
- Make sure you have enough refills to last until your next doctor visit.
- Check with your pharmacy to see if it offers an automatic refill service.
- If your medicine is ordered by mail, order refills at least 2 weeks in advance.

### 3. Taking medicines more than once a day is inconvenient.

#### > Think about it

- What is a typical day for you and your medicines?

#### > Tips

- Ask your doctor if there is a medicine you can take less often.
- Can you take your medicines with you when you are away from home? A small bag may hold your medicines in a pocket or purse.
- A pill box with multiple times may help you keep track of all your daily medicines.

## Attitudes and Beliefs Toward Your Treatment

### 4. I do not feel confident that each one of my medicines will help me.

#### > Think about it

- Do you believe your medicines will improve your health?

#### > Tips

- Learn about your condition and how your medicine will treat it. The more you learn, the more confidence you will have about how your medicine will improve your health.
- Find out how your medicine treats your health condition.
- Talk with your doctor or pharmacist about any fears you may have. Do not let your fears and doubts hold you back. Just take one step at a time.
- Ask your doctor or pharmacist to explain things in a way you can understand:
  - How will your medicines help you?
  - What will happen if you do not take them?

## 5. I do not know if I am reaching my health goals.

### > Think about it

- What is the one thing you can do to help improve your health? You are the most important person in managing your condition. Is this something you can do by yourself, or do you need some help?

### > Tips

- Track your goals. Even small goals show you are making progress and getting closer to the big goal.
- Talk to your family and friends about your goals. Get their help when you need it.
- Work with your doctor to set goals that you are ready to reach.

### > Resources

- Use the goal checklist on [www.takingmeds.com](http://www.takingmeds.com) as a guide to taking charge of your health.

## Help From Others: Getting Support

## 6. I do not have someone I can call with questions about my medicines.

### > Think about it

- Can you manage your medicines by yourself? Do you need help with this?

### > Tips

- Ask a family member or friend to join you for your next doctor visit so that they can also hear what the doctor says about your medicines.
- Ask your doctor if there is a support group where you can talk about your medicines and learn more.
- Ask your doctor if there is a class where you can learn more about your condition and medicines.

### > Resources

- Asthma and COPD: [www.lungusa.org](http://www.lungusa.org)
- Bipolar Disorder and Depression: [www.dbsalliance.org](http://www.dbsalliance.org)
- Heart Failure: [www.americanheart.org](http://www.americanheart.org)
- Diabetes: [www.diabetes.org](http://www.diabetes.org)

## Talking With Healthcare Team

## 7. My doctor/nurse and I do not work together to make decisions.

### > Think about it

- Who makes decisions about your health?

### > Tips

- Ask your doctor or pharmacist to help you fill out a goal checklist.
- Work with your doctor to set goals.
- Be sure to tell your doctor about any problems you may be having that keep you from taking your medicines.
- Together, you and your doctor may find answers to the problems that keep you from taking your medicines.

### > Resources

- Use the goal checklist on [www.takingmeds.com](http://www.takingmeds.com) as a guide to taking charge of your health.

## Taking Medicines

## 8. I have taken a medicine more or less often than prescribed.

### > Think about it

- How do you use your medicines to manage your health? Is the medicine too weak? Too strong?

### > Tips

- Be sure you understand when you need to take your medicine every day.
- Ask your doctor to help you fill out your medicine chart.

### > Resources

- Use the medicine chart on [www.takingmeds.com](http://www.takingmeds.com) as a guide to taking charge of your health.

**9. I have skipped or stopped taking a medicine because I didn't think it was working.**

**> Think about it**

- How do you know if your medicine is working? What happens to your health condition when you skip or stop your medicine?

**> Tips**

- Skipping medicine means it cannot work as well. Be sure to take your medicine as directed.
- Talk with your doctor so that you understand when to take your medicine every day.
- Talk with your doctor or pharmacist about what to do if you miss taking your medicine.
- It may take a while before you feel the effects of some medicines.
- Even when you feel better, you may need to continue taking your medicine for a long time.

**10. I have skipped or stopped taking a medicine because it made me feel bad.**

**> Think about it**

- What kind of side effects do you have that make it difficult for you to take your medicines?

**> Tips**

- Side effects are common to medicines. Tell your doctor about any side effects you may have.
- Some can be managed or may go away over time. Talk with your doctor or pharmacist if your medicines make you feel bad.
- If you feel bad or sleepy after taking your medicines, talk with your doctor or pharmacist about taking them at a different time.
- NEVER stop taking your medicine without first talking to your doctor.

**11. I have skipped, stopped, not refilled, or taken less medicine because of the cost.**

**> Think about it**

- Are there assistance programs that could help you with the cost of your medicines?

**> Tips**

- Most drug companies have programs for low-income patients.
- Talk with your pharmacist about ways to help you save money.

**> Resources**

- [www.togetherrxaccess.com](http://www.togetherrxaccess.com), [www.gskforyou.com](http://www.gskforyou.com), or [www.PPARx.org](http://www.PPARx.org)
- Another option is to call 1-800-Medicare or visit [www.medicare.gov](http://www.medicare.gov).

**12. I have not had medicine with me when it was time to take it.**

**> Think about it**

- How do you manage your medicines when you are away from home or traveling?

**> Tips**

- Use a pill box marked with the days of the week.
- Take it with you when you are away from home.
- Try taking your medicines with other daily habits, such as in the morning when brushing your teeth or in the evening around dinner time.

[This material was developed by GlaxoSmithKline.]

