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Medication Safety and Adherence

Educating patients about medication safety and adherence begins when you are writing a prescription. Not taking medications as prescribed can lead to hospitalization or even death. We encourage you to talk to your patients about medication adherence. Consider explaining the importance of taking medication as instructed and the risks of not taking the proper dose. This extra time spent with your patients, including reconciling medications at every visit, can have a lasting effect on their health outcomes.



What Patients Should Know

Before leaving your office your patient should know:

- Why the medication was selected and the condition it is intended to treat.
- How the medication works.
- How to take the medication (i.e., with food, in the morning, etc.) and the dosage.
- What to do if a dose is missed.
- Common adverse effects and what to do if side effects occur.
- What the medication is expected to do and how dosing and effectiveness will be monitored.

In addition, advise your patients to talk to their pharmacist if they have more questions after they leave your office. Pharmacists offer information, support and can help reinforce medication adherence. They can also help overcome media influence with regard to safety and risk concerns of certain medications.

Drug costs can have an influence on medication adherence. Over 20 percent of prescriptions go unfilled. To determine whether a specific drug is covered by a member's health plan, use:

- The [Formulary Search](#) for EmblemHealth, GHI, GHI HMO, HIP and Vytra Commercial benefit plans
- The [Medicare Formulary Search](#) for EmblemHealth, ConnectiCare and Vytra Medicare benefit plans
- The [Medicaid Formulary Search](#) for HIP Medicaid and HIP Family Health Plus benefit plans