

Adherence to Pharmacological Treatment



Adherence to drug treatment means following the way your doctor has told you to use your medications, this considering the dose, the frequency, and the duration time. There may be several reasons why you do not comply with the indicated treatment, including considering that the medication is not adequate, fearing possible side effects, not understanding the instructions, or

forgetting it. However, it is important to keep in mind that if you do not follow the indicated medical treatment, the symptoms will not be relieved, and the condition may worsen.

Important data

- Each year in the United States, an estimated 125,000 deaths from cardiovascular diseases, such as heart attacks and strokes, are associated with not following recommended treatment.
- Indifference to follow medical advice about treatment will increase health care costs and may lead to a worsening quality of life. For example, not using the prescribed doses of an antibiotic can cause the infection to reactivate and contribute to resistance to the drug.
- In children it can be difficult to get them take their medications as indicated due to the bad taste or because they can be frightened by the way it is administered, for example, injections, eye drops, among others.
- In adulthood, difficulties in adhering to treatment are more related to forgetting instructions on how to use them, interactions, and side effects between medications.

Precautions to avoid drug interaction

Medicine or drugs interaction occurs when there is a reaction between the medicines, drinks, foods, or supplements you use. To prevent any adverse reactions or possible interactions, you should tell your physician and specialists about all

medications you take, including prescription, over the counter, vitamins, and supplements. Here are some recommendations:

- If you are using medication, avoid consuming alcohol.
- Do not use medicine to treat insomnia if you are using sedatives or tranquilizers.
- Check with your doctor before using products that contain aspirin.
- If you have abdominal pain, nausea, or vomiting, do not use laxatives.
- Do not use a nasal decongestant if you are using prescription medications for high blood pressure, diabetes, or heart disease, unless prescribed by your doctor.
- Some medicines can cause mild or severe allergic reactions such as rashes, swelling, or difficulty breathing.

Recommendations to promote adherence to pharmacological treatment:

- Try to remember your drug name, dosage, such as the use treatment of each medications.
- Talk to your doctor about any concern about prescription drugs or treatment.

- Keep medicines away from heat, light, and humidity.
- Read and follow your doctor's recommendations and the warnings on the medicine label.
- Create a system to help you remember take your medication, such as set an alarm on the phone or use a pill container to organize daily and on certain time.
- Recognize those medicines that you cannot take at the same time with others.
- Use the same pharmacy to fill all your medications.
- Use only the dose recommended by your doctor.
- Tell your doctor if you have any side effects or if you will stop taking any medicine.
- Check with your doctor or pharmacist if you can use any over-the-counter medicine.
- Do not share your prescription drugs with other people.
- Quality assurance in drug manufacturing process.
- How the drug works and respond in the body
- How it is used

The quality of generic and brand name drugs is regulated with strict safety standards by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). It is important to whether changing medications is the best treatment option for you.

Social and Emotional Aspect

For recommendations, tools, and resources how you and your family can manage emotional and physical concerns present during and after medical treatment, please visit your physician or contact the following telephone lines:

First Health Call

1-866-337-3338
TTY- 1-866-921-0101

APS Healthcare

787-641-9133

References:

Medline Plus. (2022). *Drug interactions and side effects*. Retrieved from: <https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/drugreactions.html>

Merck Manuals. (2019). *Adherence to pharmacological treatment*. Retrieved from: <https://www.merckmanuals.com/es-pr/hogar/f%C3%A1rmacos-o-sustancias/factores-que-influyen-en-la-respuesta-del-organismo-a-los-f%C3%A1rmacos/Drugs/adherence-to-drug-treatment%C3%B3gic>

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Details about generic drugs and brand name drugs

The similarities between a generic drug and a brand name drug are:

- Content and format of medication dosage
- Security
- Drug potency and effectiveness