

Helping you stick to your Medicine Plan: Kidney Transplant Adherence

Did you know?

Adherence is the medical word used to explain how well someone sticks to a medicine or health care plan.

Is adherence important?

- Sticking to your health care plan means a healthy kidney.
- Missing medications can cause kidney damage.
- **Missing medications is the main reason people lose their kidney transplant.**
- Take your medications on time, every time.



What does a normal medication schedule after kidney transplant look like?

- Special medicines keep your kidney safe and keep you healthy.
- Many of these medicines only work for about half a day, so they need to be taken every 12 hours to protect your kidney.
- Every time a dose is late or missed, your kidney is at risk of being damaged.
- Lots of damage can result in loss of the kidney transplant.

How long will I have to take my anti-rejection medicine?

Anti-rejection medicines need to be taken:

- At exactly 8 am and 8 pm
- Every day
- For the rest of your life



Tips to take pills on time, every time

Get the facts!

- Ask about your medicine and take charge of your schedule.
- Talk with your medical team to know what your medicines are for.
- Ask about side effects and how to manage them.
- Ask what to do if you miss a dose.
- Find out what to do if you are sick and cannot keep your medicine down.



Have a plan!

- Make a schedule for all the things you do in a day, like eat meals, go to school and go to bed and when to take your medicines.
- Pick a daily activity – like preparing for school, watching your favorite TV show, or brushing your teeth and take your pills at that time every day.

Keep it simple.

- Keep your medicines in one place, like in your kitchen, so you can take them around meal-times.
- Set an alarm. Use a wristwatch or cell phone to set alarms for 15 minutes after the medicine needs to be taken (like 8:15).
- This will remind you to check that you took your medicine. If you did not, take your medicine right away.



Find a dose buddy!

- If other people at home take medicines, then you can help each other to remember.



Who is responsible for making sure I get my medicine?

- Parents or guardians are responsible for making sure that medicine is given to children at the right time every day.
 - As children grow, they start to become more independent.
 - It is important to help teens learn to be responsible.

Teens want to be responsible. Start slowly and involve your teen by:

- Helping them fill pill boxes
- Encouraging them to learn the name of the medicine and how it works
- Showing them where you pick up the medicine
- Teaching them how to order medicine from the pharmacy

- Reviewing what to do if they forget a medicine or are sick and have trouble keeping the medicine down
- Instead of asking your teen “did you take your meds?”, check the bubble-pack or pill-box first
- If the pills were taken, great! Encourage the good habit with a “well done!”
- If the pills are still there, bring them to your teen to take. That’s working together!

Remember it is the parent or guardian who is responsible to make sure every dose has been taken.

Who can help me with adherence?

- Your transplant team can help you prepare a plan.
- You can meet with the pharmacist or nurse.
- You can ask your doctor for help.

Who do I call if I have questions about adherence in transplant?

We are here to help!

- Call your pediatric transplant coordinator at 204-787-4842 or your post-transplant nurse clinician at 204-787-4725.
- Out of town? Call toll free 1-877-499-8774 and ask for extension 74842 or extension 74725.

Transplant Manitoba-Pediatric Kidney Program
FE009 - 685 William Avenue Winnipeg, Manitoba R3A 1S1
Phone: (204) 787-4947
Toll free at 1-877-499-8774 - extension 74947
Fax: (204) 787-1187