



# Stick With It!

## A Guide to Adhering to Medicines

**Adherence**...that's what we doctors call when you're able to take medications we prescribe for you.

It's very important to adhere to prescriptions, but it's not always easy. If you're finding it's hard to take your medicines, your doctor will certainly want to know, so don't be shy!

To better understand why you may be finding it hard to stick with it, here are some questions you can ask yourself:

- 1) **Do I understand why I'm taking this drug?** Taking medicines can be scary, but there's a good reason your doctor prescribed medicine, and it's much easier to stick with it if you know the reason why. That's really important if you take more than one medication or have more than one medical problem.  
**Solution:** Ask your doctor exactly which of your conditions or diagnoses this medicine is for.
- 2) **Am I having side effects I don't like?** Many medicines have unpleasant effects. Some are temporary, others may last a long time, but knowing what to expect can help. If you take several medicines, they can have interactions that can also lead to discomfort.  
**Solution:** Ask your doctor or pharmacist what to expect, or go to the **Drug Encyclopedia** on your Physicians' Home Page at [kp.org/mydoctor](http://kp.org/mydoctor).
- 3) **Bad timing?** Sometimes, it's hard to stick with it because you have to take a medicine several times a day, or in places where it's not always convenient.  
**Solutions:** There may be similar medicines to the one your doctor prescribed that allow you to take them fewer times a day.
- 4) **For Parents: Is this the right form?** Many medicines come in several forms—pill, capsules, liquids or chewables. Children may have trouble with one form versus the other, so make sure you get what goes down easiest.
- 5) **Are you taking a lot of different medicines?** Many of us need several medicines depending on our health issues. It can be hard to keep track of what to take and when to take it.  
**Solution:** Having a clear list of the names of your medicines (you can always get this from your doctor or pharmacist), when to take them, and a pill organizer can help.

Remember, all of us at Kaiser Permanente want you to Thrive. That may mean taking your medications, but it also means eating right, exercising and managing your stress. If you have any questions, please contact your doctor, pharmacist, or go online at [kp.org](http://kp.org) to find great resources to keep you healthy.



This information is not intended to diagnose health problems or to take the place of medical advice or care you receive from your physician or other health care professional. If you have persistent health problems, or if you have additional questions, please consult with your doctor. If you have questions or need more information about your medication, please speak to your pharmacist. Kaiser Permanente does not endorse the medications or products mentioned. Any trade names listed are for easy identification only.