

# Medication Adherence and Ongoing Review

Taking psychiatric medication as prescribed and attending regular reviews are important parts of safe and effective treatment. This leaflet explains why adherence and ongoing review matter and what to do if difficulties arise.

---

## What Is Medication Adherence?

Medication adherence means:

- Taking medication as prescribed
- Taking it at the recommended times
- Continuing treatment as agreed

Adherence helps ensure medication is given a fair and safe trial.

---

## Why Adherence Is Important

Consistent use of medication helps:

- Reduce symptoms more effectively
- Allow accurate assessment of response
- Minimise risks associated with stopping and starting medication

Irregular use can make it difficult to know whether a medication is helping.

---

## Common Challenges with Adherence

It is common to experience difficulties such as:

- Forgetting doses
- Concerns about side effects
- Uncertainty about benefit
- Changes in routine
- Hesitation about long-term use

These concerns are understandable and can be discussed during appointments.

---

## If You Miss Doses

If you miss a dose:

- Do not double the next dose unless advised
- Resume the usual schedule where possible

If multiple doses are missed, discuss this during your next appointment.

---

## Stopping Medication

Medication should not be:

- Stopped suddenly
- Reduced or changed without medical advice

Sudden changes can increase the risk of:

- Withdrawal symptoms
- Symptom relapse

If you are considering stopping medication, this should be planned carefully with your psychiatrist.

---

## Ongoing Review and Monitoring

Ongoing review allows:

- Monitoring of effectiveness
- Identification of side effects
- Adjustment of dose or medication
- Review of the ongoing need for treatment

Medication review is a routine and expected part of psychiatric care.

---

## Duration of Treatment

The length of time medication is used varies.

Decisions about duration consider:

- Nature and severity of symptoms
- Past history
- Response to treatment
- Risk of relapse

There is no single “correct” duration for all patients.

---

## **Role of Follow-Up Appointments**

Follow-up appointments support:

- Safe prescribing
- Shared decision-making
- Early identification of concerns

Regular review helps ensure medication remains appropriate.

---

## **Combining Medication with Other Strategies**

Medication is often most effective when combined with:

- Psychological strategies or therapy
- Lifestyle support
- Stress management

Treatment plans may change over time as circumstances change.

---

## **Talking About Concerns**

If you have concerns about medication:

- Raise them during appointments
- Discuss benefits, risks, and alternatives

Open discussion helps ensure treatment decisions align with your needs and preferences.

---

## **Summary**

Medication adherence and regular review:

- Support safety
- Improve treatment outcomes
- Allow flexible and responsive care

Your involvement in the review process is an important part of treatment.

---