

Medication adherence

Best practices identified by physicians

Individual considerations

Utilizing a patient-centered approach to incorporate patient beliefs, preferences and goals helps address barriers to adherence:

- **Core health beliefs** – Some patients possess a holistic view of health that integrates physical, mental and spiritual well-being.
- **Norms and values** – Some patients rely on community and family support, and often place the needs of others above their own.
- **Communication styles** – Verbal and nonverbal communication styles vary by culture.

Pill-splitting guidance

Splitting of certain medications can cause safety concerns. In general, patients should not split the following:

- Extended or delayed-release formulations
- Enteric-coated medications
- Orally disintegrating or sublingual formulations

Getting to know your patient

These best practices are currently being used by pharmacists, nurses and/or patient care managers, and have proven themselves useful.

Common complaints from patients that lead to medication adherence, and possible solutions:

Complaint	Potential solution
Forgetfulness or routine disruption	• Ask patients how they incorporate their medications into their daily routine. • Recommend the patient set alarms and take their medications at the same time every day.
Multiple medications	• Discuss adherence aids such as plastic pill organizers. • If your patient has a smartphone, suggest mobile apps such as CareZone, Medisafe or Pill Reminder. Patients can also type the word “medication” into the app store and several options should appear. ○ Most applications have alarms to remind patients when they need to take medication and when they need to refill a medication. ○ Have patients ask their pharmacist if they recommend an app. In addition, most large chain pharmacies have their own application.
High cost	• When possible, provide patients with a list of alternatives. Copays and coverage can vary depending on the type of plan they have.
Side effects	• Determine the seriousness of the side effect. • Some side effects are not tolerable to patients; if this is the case, a change may be in order. • If the side effect is not serious, consider focusing on the positive: ○ Explain the benefits of adhering to their medication ○ Consider “positive framing.” For example, if one in 100 patients experiences a side effect, stress that 99 patients in 100 will NOT.
Lack of understanding	• Sometimes, patients do not understand their conditions and the benefits of their medications. One potential solution is to help patients make a medication instruction sheet, covering common side effects, why they are taking the medication and how often they need to take the medication.
Lack of symptoms	• Help patients understand that some medications work only if taken consistently, rather than when they feel symptoms.
Transportation	• Write prescriptions for a 90-day supply to reduce the number of trips made to the pharmacy or consider having the patient switch to mail-order. • Many pharmacies can sync refills so patients can pick up all prescriptions on the same day. Check with the patient’s pharmacy to see if this is an option.

Medication adherence

Physicians are finding the following practices to be helpful in improving adherence:

- Conducting open discussions with patients to identify and resolve patient-specific adherence barriers
- Providing a 90-day prescription for maintenance drugs.
 - If you have system reminders or pop-ups, add a 90-day supply reminder for your patient's next refill.
- Providing an updated prescription to the pharmacy if a patient's medication dose has changed since the original prescription
- Reinforcing patients' understanding of the role of diabetes, cholesterol and hypertension medications in their therapy and the expected duration of the therapy

Communication with your patients

Humana contacts your patients who are struggling with adherence and offers refill reminders and assistance along with adherence recommendations at no additional cost. We also mail educational materials to them regarding the importance of adherence and recommendations to overcome barriers.

Humana Pharmacy®

Humana Pharmacy is a mail-order pharmacy that is an option for Humana-covered patients and may help them with adherence:

- Many of Humana's Medicare plans offer a \$0 copayment for Tier 1 and Tier 2 generic drugs at Humana Pharmacy.
- Humana Pharmacy sends refill reminders by phone, email and/or text message.
- Humana Pharmacy ships medications to the location of the patient's choice, eliminating time spent traveling to a retail pharmacy. Standard shipping is free.

Humana recognizes that your patients have the sole discretion to choose their pharmacy and that you must use your independent medical judgment when advising patients about their pharmacy choices. Other pharmacies are available in our network. Your patients with a Humana plan should check their plan documents to verify their prescription benefits.

Additionally, you can refer patients to [Humana.com/takemymedicine](https://www.humana.com/takemymedicine) for adherence tips and tools.

To prescribe with Humana Pharmacy, call **1-800-379-0092**.

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Humana programs and resources

Humana recognizes that medication adherence is everyone's concern. Our focus on medication adherence includes the following best practices and resources.

The value of 90-day prescriptions

An analysis of Humana claims shows **87%** of Medicare Advantage members who fill 90-day prescriptions at a mail-order facility are adherent to their medication.¹

1. Based on a study conducted by Pharmacy Analytics, a division of Humana Pharmacy Solutions. Performance rates for 30- and 90-day prescriptions. Completed Jan. 20, 2018. Humana prescription claims data January 2017 through December 2017.