

Medication Adherence Discussion Guide

Diabetes

Having diabetes increases your risk for certain conditions, which is why it is important to take your diabetes medications as prescribed. Be sure to:

- Fill and pick up your prescriptions on time
- Never skip a dose of your medication
- Never cut or split your medications, unless your doctor tells you to do so
- Get your doctor's permission before making any changes to your medication routine

Possible Complications if You Do Not Take Care of Your Blood Sugar

Neuropathy (nerve damage)

When there is too much sugar in your blood and your body's cells can't absorb it, the sugar can damage the nerve fibers in your legs and feet.

This is called neuropathy. It can cause pain and numbness in the legs and feet. The pain and numbness can spread throughout your body over time.

Nephropathy (kidney damage)

Your kidneys remove waste from your blood. Too much sugar in your blood can damage your kidneys over time until they can no longer work properly. This will increase your risk for kidney failure.

In the U.S., diabetes is the leading cause of kidney failure, which can lead to the need for dialysis or a kidney transplant.

Retinopathy (eye damage)

Over time, too much sugar in your blood can block the blood vessels that carry nutrients to the retina, which is the part of your eye that allows you to see light.

This is called retinopathy. Diabetic retinopathy is the leading cause of blindness in Americans ages 20 to 74.

When your blood sugar remains high, serious complications can occur. By taking your medications as prescribed, you can help prevent damage to your nerves, kidneys and eyes.