

Importance of Taking Medications On-Time

Why Is It Important?

Parkinson's medications work by increasing the level of dopamine in the brain. If someone doesn't take their Parkinson's medicine on time, there will be a dip in their dopamine levels which will consequently cause their Parkinson's symptoms to increase and become less controlled.

What Do I Do If I Miss a Dose?

- If a dose is forgotten, make sure to take it as soon as possible and then adjust the time of your next doses. For example, if you normally take your medication at 6 am, 10 am, 2 pm, and 6 pm but forget your 10 am dose until 12 pm, then take your next doses at 4 pm, and 8 pm.
- Do not take two doses together to make up for a missed dose.
- If you are taking a once daily dose but miss taking it at your normal time, take it when you remember if on the same day.

Tips for Remembering Take Medications On Time

- Set an alarm on your phone or smart watch
- Use a pill box with section for each day and time to help you remember If you have taken all of your doses
- Ask a family member to call you at your dose times
- Arrange care visits around when you need medications
- Keep a daily check list nearby with the times of each dose to refer back to throughout the day
- Keep a medication journal to keep track

How Do I Stay On Schedule During Hospital Stays?

- Make sure to ***over communicate*** with your doctors and nurses during your stay, emphasizing the importance of taking your medications on time
- Bring your medication journal and schedule with you as a visual reminder for both you and your nurses
- If the hospital stay is planned, discuss your needs during your pre-admission appointments
- Keep your Parkinson's care team in the loop with any hospital stays. If taking medications on time becomes an issue, your neurologist or movement disorder specialist can call the hospital staff working with you and can reiterate the importance of timely medication doses.