



Why taking IBD medication is important

What does adherence mean?

A gastroenterologist will often mention the word “adherence” when talking about treatments. Adherence means you know and understand what’s happening in your treatment plan, you have agreed to the plan and are following it. FACT: medicine only works if you take it. The medications used for IBD work best when they are always present in the blood. If you are not following your treatment plan, the medication will not have the opportunity to work as effectively.

Does it matter if I forget the occasional pill or dose?

If it happens occasionally, it doesn't matter. If you miss a pill or dose regularly then you run the risk of flares and discomfort. You might also sensitize yourself to the medication, meaning it might never work again.

Why do I have to stay on a treatment if I feel better?

Since there is no cure, all we can do is turn off the disease and try to keep it off. Some medicines are ‘induction’ medicines, and taking those medications induce remission and turn off your IBD. Some medicines are ‘maintenance’ medicines, and those medicines are designed to keep your IBD away. If you stop those medications, chances are your IBD will come back.



Why do I have to take a medication that makes me feel bad?

It's important to talk about what's not working for you, otherwise your medical team will think everything is ok. Sometimes we can give you options, such as flavouring medication, changing timings or doses, or switching to a different medication. Remember, a flare will feel worse than some of the other symptoms you might experience from the medicine.

What is the best time to take my medications?

Discuss your routine with your gastroenterologist. It's important to establish a dependable and realistic routine, one you are likely to stick to. Using a pillbox, smartphone app, alarm reminder or website that sends text reminders can help. It doesn't matter which system you use, as long as you find one that works well for you.



What happens when I don't take my medication?

Usually, nothing will happen immediately. When IBD is active, we believe your intestines are red, swollen and inflamed. Active disease can cause tummy aches, loose poops, mouth sores and aching joints. It's possible the intestines will eventually scar or break, and some patients might develop a fistula or abscess. Not only is this painful, but it often requires surgery that could have been avoided. Over the long-term without treatment, your growth and bone strength can be seriously compromised.



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ROBBIE'S RAINBOW MISSION

Our mission is to help improve the health and quality of life of children and teens living with Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis (IBD).

We are committed to helping guide and support IBD families, teens and children by providing access to critical treatments and care, building educational resources and patient advocacy.



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