

The Importance of Treatment Adherence Among Patients With Cystic Fibrosis

For case managers to understand how important it is for cystic fibrosis (CF) patients to maintain their treatment plans and medications.

CF is a complex, chronic disease with lifelong medication regimens that are burdensome for many patients and their caregivers.^{1,2} Consider that patients with CF on average take 8-10 medications daily, and the regimen can take ~2-3 hours, largely due to nebulized inhaled medicines.^{1,3}

CF medication adherence is hindered by barriers⁴

- Adherence to medication among people with CF can range from approximately 35% to 75% depending on the type of measure, medication, and population characteristics
- Adherence typically begins to decline in adolescence and is lowest among young adults, when CF responsibility transitions from parents

The challenge for CF care teams³

To help patients understand how their daily treatment regimen improves their long-term health outcomes

Care teams are well positioned to communicate with patients and caregivers about the importance and value of treatment adherence²



Establish a supportive, collaborative relationship with patients and families



Maintain an open and honest dialogue to identify opportunities for improvement



Establish effective communication between patients, families, and healthcare professionals

Interventions to improve adherence in CF³

Demographic and psychosocial	Time and convenience	Treatment beliefs
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Talk about the impact of disease progression• Assess patient/family understanding of CF and treatment adherence• Identify psychosocial factors that may affect adherence and refer patients to providers and/or counseling to assist with coping skills• Assess educational needs of patients/families; refer them to helpful disease information	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Encourage patients to set up electronic reminders• Educate patients/families about technology that supports adherence (eg, text reminders, apps, nebulizer data-capture)• Develop time-management strategies with a plan to reward adherence• Encourage patients to keep a daily diary of inhaled therapy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reinforce the potential benefits of therapy and the importance of treatment adherence

Patients can learn more about their CF treatments by talking with their care teams.

References: 1. Abraham O, Li JS, Monangai KE, Feathers AM, Weiner D. The pharmacist's role in supporting people living with cystic fibrosis. *J Am Pharm Assoc.* 2018;58(3):246-249. 2. Jamieson N, Fitzgerald D, Singh-Grewal D, et al. Children's experiences of cystic fibrosis: a systematic review of qualitative studies. *Pediatrics.* 2014;133(6):e1683-e1697. 3. Lomas P. Enhancing adherence to inhaled therapies in cystic fibrosis. *Thorax.* 2014;69(2):39-47. 4. Eakin MN, Riekert KA. The impact of medication adherence on lung health outcomes in cystic fibrosis. *Curr Opin Pulm Med.* 2013;19(6):687-691.

