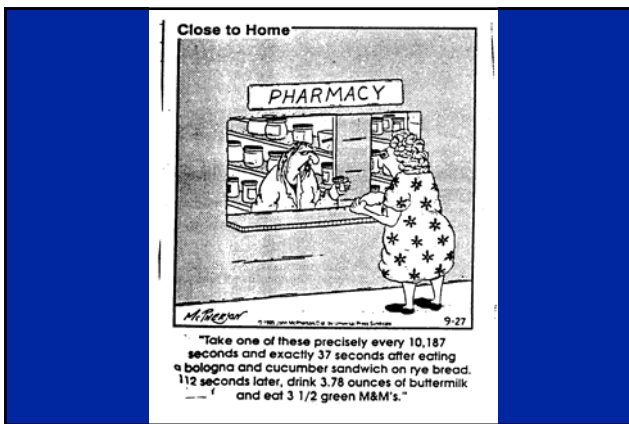


Even the Best Drug Doesn't Work if the Person Doesn't Take It:
Strategies to Improve Compliance and Collaboration with People with Schizophrenia

Ronald J Diamond M.D.
Department of Psychiatry
University of Wisconsin

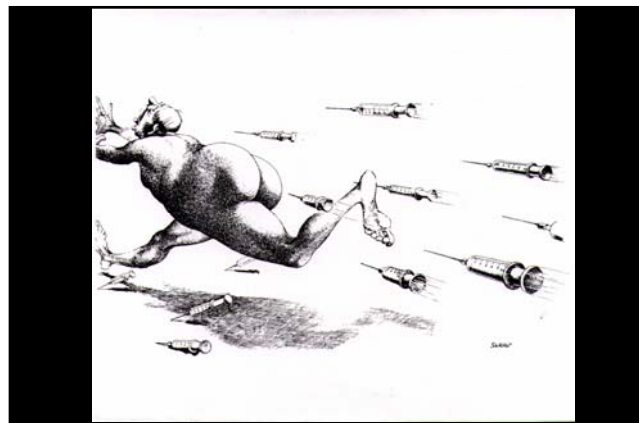
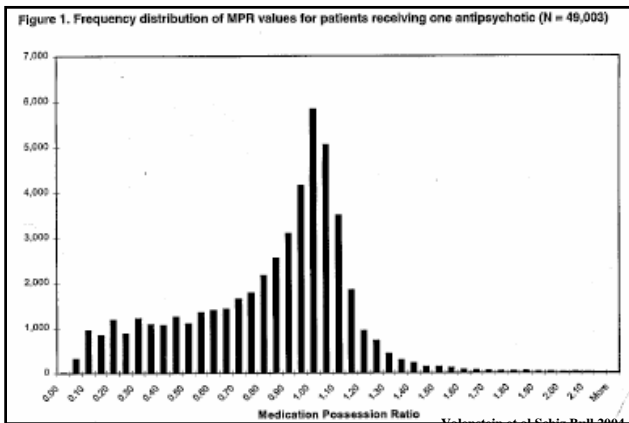
Compliance with Medication Regimens for Mental and Physical Disorders

	Follow-up months	compliance rates (SD)	# of studies
Compliance Assessed with Microelectronic Monitoring Among Patients with Nonpsychiatric Disorders	12	.25-10	76% (10)
Compliance with Antidepressant Medication	10	1.5-12	65% (18)
Compliance with Antipsychotic Medication	24	3-24	58% (19)



The special problem of medication:

Medication is such an important part of treatment that a person who refuses to take it is often considered "treatment resistant" or "non-compliant" even if they go along with all other aspects of treatment!



Variables Associated with Decreased Medication Compliance:

- long-term maintenance medication
- medication with uncomfortable side effects
- illness where going off medication makes the person feel better

Not all relapse is caused by the consumer not taking prescribed medication

There are problems with the entire concept of compliance

Moving from compliance to collaboration

The Role of Medication in the Treatment of People with Schizophrenia

- Medication is NEVER a goal of treatment
- Medication is a tool that at times can be useful in helping people achieve their own life goals
- The issue is not to take the medication as ordered, but to take the medication in a way that is most effective
- Taking medication consistently will increase its effectiveness for most medications and most people

The Use of Medication

- The issue is NOT compliance, but rather effectiveness
- Is the medication helping the client to achieve his or her life goals
- Taking the medication consistently will generally improve this effectiveness

Assumptions:

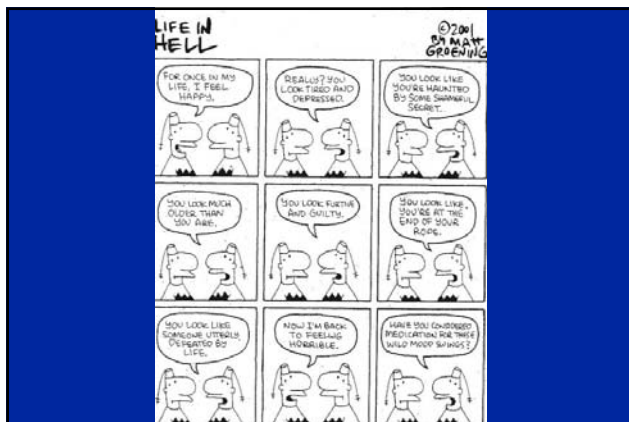
1. People should be allowed and encouraged to take control over their own lives when realistically possible.
2. People, including schizophrenic people, do things that they think will make them feel better.

A person may decide to take more or less medication than prescribed:

- as one way of taking more control over his own life
- in an attempt to regulate his own dose so as to feel better

Words that get in the way of relationship

- Treatment Resistant
- Manipulative
- Person is “too ill” to know what is good for them
- Person does not want any help



Antipsychotic medications are prescribed to improve the person's quality of life

- objective criteria
- subjective criteria

General steps to increase effective medication use:

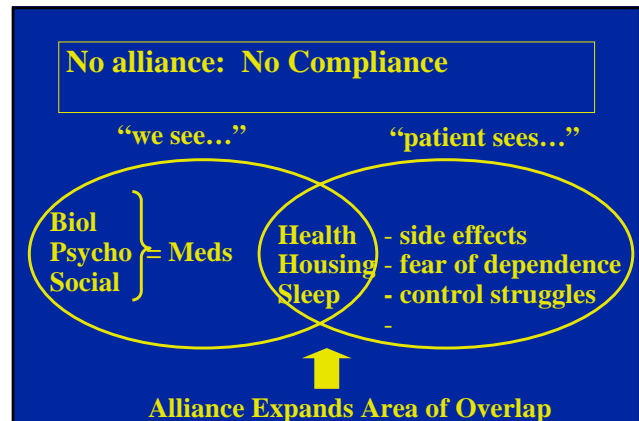
- monitor drug dose closely
- monitor and treat drug side effects
- simplify drug regimens as much as possible
- make sure the consumer understands how the medication should be taken.
- make sure the consumer can pay for the medication

Ritual of the “Med Check”

- Focuses on Problems and deficits
- Clinician controls the interaction
- Designed to meet needs and agenda of clinician rather than consumer
- Assume consumer will adapt to the needs and style of the clinician

Vs how we make initial contact with someone we like

- Steer discussion to areas the person enjoys and does well at
- Negotiates dominance and control—sensitive to interpersonal nuances
- Participants “pace” each other—match your style and manner to the other person



Strategies for enhancing medication use in persons with long term mental illness:

1. Put the medication into the context of the person’s life
3. Be concerned about how the person is using medication.
2. Develop concrete target symptoms to measure what the medication is doing
4. Involve the consumer as much as possible.
5. Inform the consumer, the family and the rest of the mental health team.
6. Actively address medication side effects
7. Involve the consumer’s support system.
8. Be assertive when necessary
9. When all else fails develop realistic plans to deal with expected problems.

Strategies for enhancing medication use in persons with long term mental illness:

1. Put the medication into the context of the person’s life.
 - Start with the person's own agenda. What does the person want to be different in his life?
 - Present medication as something that can help the person achieve this.
 - **BE CONCRETE**

Strategies for enhancing medication use in persons with long term mental illness:

2. Develop concrete target symptoms for the medication
 - What would “doing better” look like
 - What would “doing worse” look like
 - How long is a reasonable trial

Strategies for enhancing medication use in persons with long term mental illness:

3. Be concerned about compliance.
 - Ask the consumer what medication he is actually taking.
 - Monitor actual medication use.
 - Assume that consumer-initiated medication changes are decisions the person has made, rather than mistakes.
 - Track specific, concrete behaviors and feelings.

Noncompliance caused by the person's disorganization or confusion can be improved by:

- simplifying the medication regimen
- scheduling medication along with other regular activities such as meals.
- packaging medication in daily containers.
- having medication dispensed by staff, friends, family, etc.

Use of long-acting injections:

- Some consumers prefer infrequent medications to daily pills.
- Intramuscular injections may be more effective than oral medication for some people.
- Medication monitoring is easier with long acting injections, but follow-up for missed injections is critical.

Strategies for enhancing medication use in persons with long term mental illness:

4. Involve the consumer as much as possible.
 - Allow the consumer realistic control whenever possible.
 - Listen to the consumer's feelings about the medication.

Strategies for enhancing medication use in persons with long term mental illness:

5. Inform the consumer, the family and the rest of the mental health team.
 - provide realistic information about medication can and cannot accomplish.
 - Introduce medication as one part of comprehensive rehabilitation.
 - Be sensitive to the agendas and concerns of all people in the consumer's support system.

Strategies for enhancing medication use in persons with long term mental illness:

6. Actively address side effects
 - Education yourself and the consumer about side effects
 - Understand how the side effects interfere with the consumer's life
 - Talk about ways of dealing with side effects
 - Work with the consumer about the trade-off between side effects and benefit

Psychoeducation approaches to increasing medication use

- Controlled studies demonstrated increased information about medication
- 3/5 studies showed no different in medication use, 1/5 showed improvement, and 1/5 showed more med discontinuation

Mueser et al Psych Services 2002

Cognitive-behavioral approaches to increasing medication use

- Simplify regimen, build into normal routine, develop cues for medication
- 4 studies demonstrated more regular medication use, fewer symptoms and less relapse

Mueser et al Psych Services 2002

Motivational approaches to increasing medication use

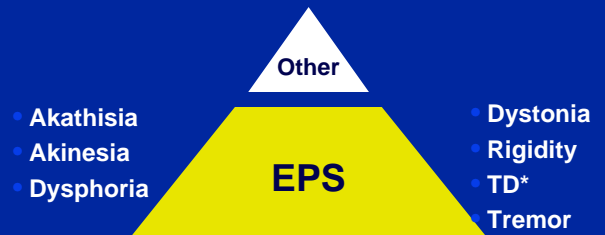
- Understand the psychology and beliefs that would support medication use
- 1 study suggested effectiveness

Mueser et al Psych Services 2002

Side Effects of Atypical Antipsychotic Medications

- Weight Gain
- Sexual Problems
- Sedation
- Some EPS/akathisia

Hierarchy of Side Effect Burden: Conventional Antipsychotics



EPS is the major burden from conventional antipsychotics

Weiden PJ et al. *J Clin Psychiatry*. 1998;59(suppl 19):36-49.

Hierarchy of Side Effect Burden: First-Line Atypical Antipsychotics

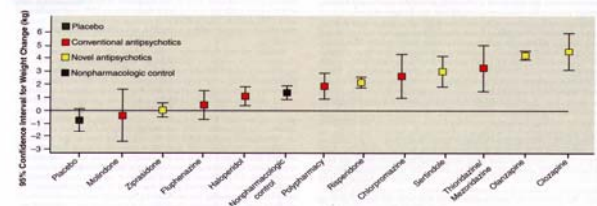


Focus of concern is moving away from EPS towards other side effects

Weiden PJ et al. *J Clin Psychiatry*. 1998;59(suppl 19):36-49.

Weight Gain (in KG) after 10 weeks

FIGURE 1. 95% Confidence Intervals for Weight Change After 10 Weeks on Standard Drug Doses, Estimated From a Random Effects Model



Allison et al. Antipsychotic-Induced Weight Gain: *Am J Psychiat* 156:11 Nov 1999

Strategies for enhancing medication use in persons with long term mental illness:

7. Involve the consumer's support system.

Strategies for enhancing medication use in persons with long term mental illness:

8. Be assertive when necessary.
 - Know what clinical and legal options are available.
 - Structure and supervision is often enough.
 - Use a wide range of incentives to encourage people to take medication.
 - Legal coercion may be necessary with some consumers for some period of time. To be effective, it requires a well developed treatment plan that includes all agencies involved.

Strategies for enhancing medication use in persons with long term mental illness:

9. When all else fails develop realistic plans to deal with expected problems.
 - Stay connected with consumer.
 - Offer other services that the consumer may be willing to accept.
 - Continue to present medication as an option.
 - Predict potential crisis, and plan ahead how to deal with them.