



Diabetes And You: Managing Multiple Medications

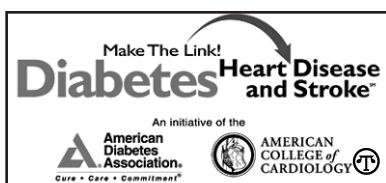
(NAPSA)—People with diabetes are at a greater risk for developing heart disease or stroke, so they often juggle treatments not just for their diabetes, but a host of related conditions, such as high blood pressure and high cholesterol. There is no single treatment; no one medicine can fix it all. This means that people with diabetes must be extremely careful about their daily medication regimens. Although managing medications can be difficult at times, taking your medications as prescribed will help you feel better in the long run and help you live a healthier life.

First, it's very important that each of your health care providers is informed about all the medications you are taking. Make a list of all prescription drugs and non-prescription (over the counter) medicines, vitamins, and dietary supplements you take. Be sure to include what each medicine is for and share this list with your health care provider at each visit. If you or someone close to you cannot make this list, bring the actual medicines with you when you visit your provider. If you have prescription medications from more than one health care provider (such as your primary care doctor and cardiologist), or if you are taking over-the-counter or herbal remedies, be sure to tell each doctor about all of your medicines. Share your list with your pharmacist as well. This will help your health care providers detect any possible interactions between your medications and recommend steps to avoid problems.

Second, it's important that you take your medications as prescribed. When starting a new medication, be sure you know what the medication is for and how and when to take it. Ask your health care provider if there are any medicines you should avoid when taking the new medication and learn about potential side effects.

Lastly, to take your medications as directed, you must remember them. Here are some tips and tools for sticking to your regimen:

- Know when to take each medicine. If the recommended schedule for taking a medicine does not fit into your daily sched-



People with diabetes must be extremely careful with their daily medication regimen.

ule (for example, a dose which must be taken while en route to work), tell your health care provider.

- Make sure you can read the label and that the instructions are clear.

- Link taking your medicine to recurring events in your daily routine—getting up, eating, brushing teeth, watching the evening news, going to bed.

- Put a reminder note where you will see it each day, such as the bathroom mirror or refrigerator door.

- Set your watch, computer or a kitchen timer to beep when it's time for your next dose.

- Make a chart showing when each medicine should be taken. If you color-code your bottles, mark the chart with the same colors. Each time you take a dose, check it off.

- Ask if your pharmacy offers a refill service reminder.

- If you miss a dose and don't know what to do, call your health care provider.

- Most importantly, don't hesitate to ask your health care providers if you have any concerns or questions about your medicines.

For more helpful tips and ideas on managing your medications, refer to www.talkaboutrx.org.

This is a message from the American Diabetes Association (ADA), the American College of Cardiology (ACC), and the National Council on Patient Information and Education (NCPPIE). The ADA and ACC are partners in an educational initiative called "Make the Link! Diabetes, Heart Disease and Stroke." Managing the ABCs of diabetes—A1C, Blood pressure and Cholesterol—will help reduce your risk for heart disease and stroke. For more information, call 1-800-DIABETES or visit www.diabetes.org/makethelink.