



Medication Management Checklist

STEP 1: ASK THE RIGHT QUESTIONS

- 1. **How far out do you want medications prepped for?** We suggest 2 weeks at a minimum, with a minimum 1 week “emergency” pack ready to go.
- 2. **Does your pharmacy offer bubble packing? If yes, do you have a lot of PRN medications that are used or not?**
- 3. **Ask your doctor about schedule**
 - a. **Can some of the medications be adjusted for fewer medication times during the day?**
 - b. **Is there anything that can be weaned off or removed?**

STEP 2: INITIAL PREPARATION

The first time you prepare everything is the most difficult; medications won't all be on the same reorder schedule, you may not know the difference between trade names and brand names, and may not have a full doctor list to keep you straight. Be patient; it's going to take time!

- 1. Get a **complete list of medications** from the physician or create your own and have the doctor verify it at the next appointment – each medication list should have at least: name of medication, dosage of medication, frequency of medication, how the medication is administered.
- 2. Get a **Medication Planner** – it's nice to have bigger slots and easy open tabs. We frequently use the ones from Walmart that come in 4x/day and 2x/day. If PRN medications that may need to be taken, consider using a time slot just for that medication.
- 3. Go through your medication list top to bottom, and line up the actual pill bottles in that order.
- 4. Get a box or bin to keep all your pill bottles in.

STEP 3: MEDICATION PLACEMENT

- 1. Open all the slots that you'll be using on the Medication Planner.
- 2. Identify your slots. What does AM mean to you? 6 AM? Breakfast? Every person is a little different. The important thing is that the meaning remains the same for you!
- 3. Start with the first bottle. Read the bottle carefully, check your list for verification, then fill the slots appropriately.
 - a. If a bottle says “twice a day,” then give it consistently, and at least 8 hours apart. For instance, you could take it at lunch and bedtime or at morning and evening. The goal is that the medication is given around the same time every day for maximum effectiveness.
 - b. If you don't have enough pills to fill up the whole medication planner, we suggest you do one of two things:
 - i. Don't fill any of the slots with that medication – reorder the medication and then fill all the slots. This will prevent you from forgetting where to start/stop.
 - ii. Fill as many slots as you can and then note on your medication list what slot you need to fill in once you get your medication reordered.
- 4. After you are done with filling all the slots, count the remaining pills. You need to have enough to fill the next medication planner.
 - a. If you do NOT have enough for the next medication planner, turn the bottle upside down so you know to reorder it.
 - b. If you DO have enough for the next medication planner, put the pill bottle in a box or bin or bag where you'll keep all of your medicine bottles.

STEP 4: FINISH UP

- 1. Once you've filled all your slots, call in the medication refills (all the pill bottles that are upside down).
Note: Some insurance companies won't allow you to reorder medications before a certain timeframe, so you may have to put it on your calendar to reorder when it's time.
- 2. Don't throw away an empty pill bottle until you have the replacement! This will ensure you don't inadvertently miss reordering medications.
- 3. Once you get your medications from the pharmacy, sit down right away with all your pill bottles. Combine your medications that are the same into the most recent pill bottle. Use a black Sharpie to cross out your name from the old pill bottle and discard it.
- 4. Confused about a name change? Call your doctor. Pharmacies are often allowed to switch a generic medication for another generic medication; this may change the color or shape of your medication.