



**DISCUSS THE  
BENEFITS AND RISKS  
OF PRESCRIPTION  
MEDICINES**

[TalkBeforeYouTake.org](http://TalkBeforeYouTake.org)

**Community  
Education  
Promoting  
Informed  
Medicine Use**

Talk about the benefits and risks of prescribed medications...



...before a prescription is written and filled.

## Discussion Today:

- Benefits & challenges of good medicine communications
- Gaps in patient/healthcare provider communications
- 4 key tips & 10 questions to ask about your medicines
- Tools and Resources



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# Clarity Can Be Hard to Achieve (on the first go-round)

When healthcare providers convey important information about prescribed medications, there is no guarantee that patients fully understand both the benefits and potential risks of starting the treatment.

How often do we walk out of a doctor's office asking, **"What did the doctor or nurse say again about this medicine?"**



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**"No questions  
right now.  
Thank you for  
your time."**

## Patient

OK—I take this medicine 3 times a day. Then if I get nauseous I can..."  
What did she just say—and there's a second medicine? Do these two go together? I don't understand...  
How much longer is this going to take?  
Oh—she just asked if I had questions...  
I really need to get going.

**"Take this medication 3  
times a day. If you get nauseous,  
you can take it with food, but not after  
8:00 pm. Take this second medication  
twice a day without food, but not before  
8:00 am or after 11:00 pm. And that's it. If  
you have questions, call me."**

**"Any Questions?"**

## Doctor

These instructions are pretty straight-forward.  
Why do I get the feeling that this patient isn't  
listening? Better ask if he has questions...

# Enhanced Medicine Communications: Benefits

Increasing communications can help patients:

- **Understand** medication side effects—for example, which ones, if any, will go away with time and those that may be experienced for the duration of being on the medicine.
- **Avoid** adverse drug reactions.
- **Improve** adherence to medicine regimen(s).
- **Live** healthier lives.



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**What we know  
about the  
communications  
gaps between  
patients and  
their healthcare  
providers**

# Lack of Medicine Communications Can Have Negative Health Consequences\*

High Rx  
Use

- **Nearly half** of Americans take prescription medicines, and more than **20 percent** of Americans take at least three.

Medicines  
not taken  
as  
prescribed

- However, a research survey of 2,000 adults found that only **56 percent** of patients report high to very high adherence to medication regimens (i.e., taking their medication regularly, as prescribed); and

Lack of  
medicine  
communication

- Approximately **62 percent** of patients were **not aware of any safety warnings** about their medicines.

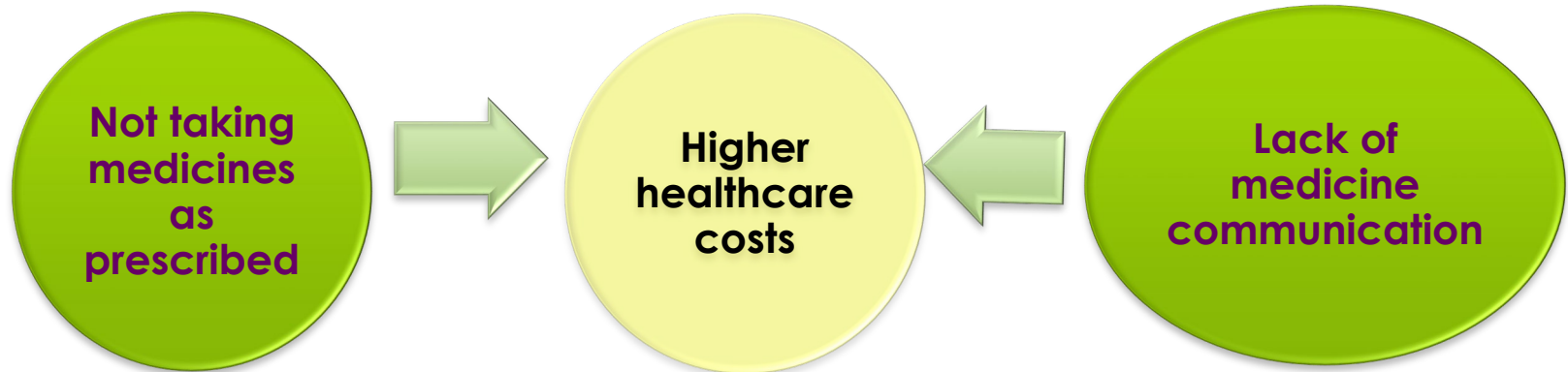
Serious  
reactions

- In fact, **ten percent** of patients unaware of the possibility of a severe side effect actually **experience a serious reaction.**

\* [2014 survey](#) of 2,000 consumers conducted for the BeMedWise Program at NeedyMeds, formerly known as the National Council of Patient Information and Education (NCPIE), by Ipsos Healthcare with input from the FDA and the Center for Drug Safety and Effectiveness (CDSE), Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health



# Lack of Medicine Communications Can Have Negative Economic Consequences



The cycle of medication non-adherence and lack of effective patient-healthcare provider communication about medications has long-term implications, contributing to as much as **\$290 billion** per year in avoidable medical spending or **13 percent** of total healthcare expenditures\*.

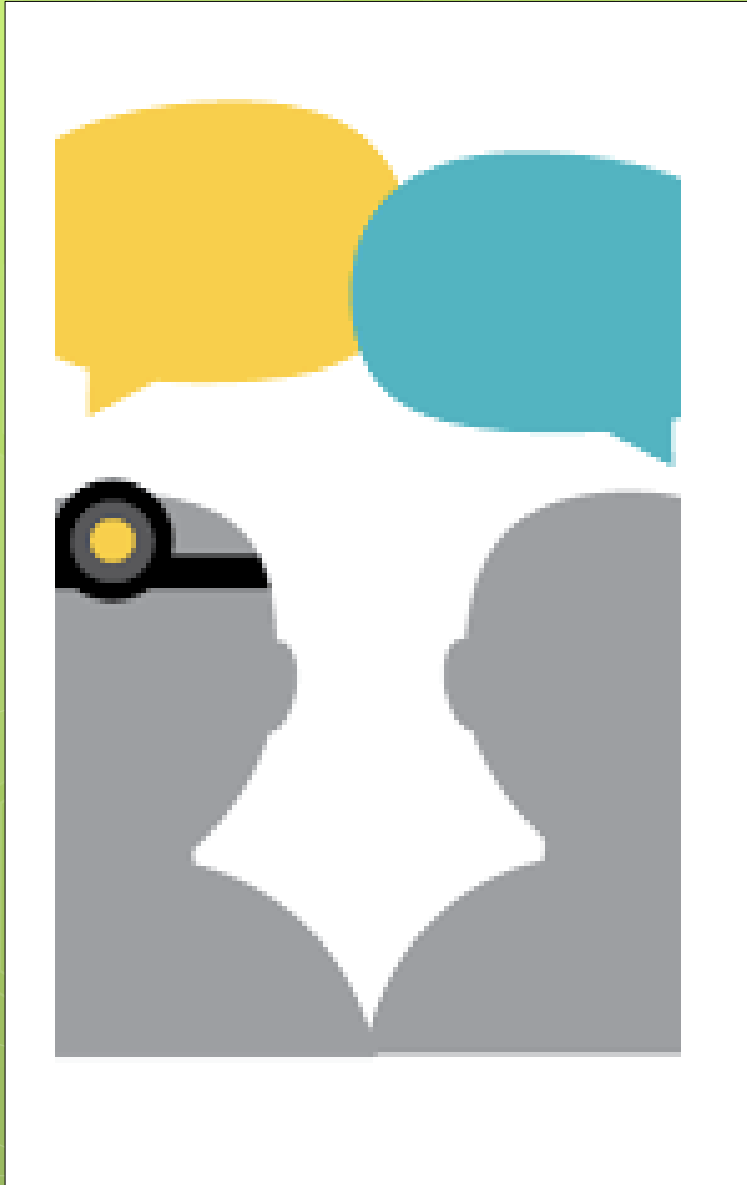
\*New England Healthcare Institute [Research Brief](#): Thinking outside the pillbox: a system-wide approach to improving patient medication adherence for chronic disease. August 2009.



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**Addressing the  
Gaps:  
Engaging in  
Conversation &  
Asking the Right  
Questions**

**Empowering  
Conversations**

**Encouraging  
Questions**



**Promoting  
Dialogue**

**Ensuring  
Clarity**



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# Addressing the Gaps with Engagement & Conversation

- The **Talk Before You Take** campaign addresses communications gaps and encourages informed patient and healthcare provider engagement and conversation about medicine uses, anticipated benefits and potential risks.
- The research and campaign were developed through a grant provided by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) Center for Drug Evaluation and Research.

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# Talk Before You Take: 4 Key Tips

o Four important tips for patients and caregivers to guide conversations with healthcare providers:

1. **Talk to your healthcare provider and ask questions** about the benefits and potential risks of prescription medicines you take.
2. **Tell your healthcare provider about all of the medicines you are taking** — including OTC medicines, vitamins, and dietary supplements.
3. **Tell your healthcare provider about any allergies or sensitivities** that you may have.
4. **Read and follow the medicine label and directions.**



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# Talk Before You Take: 10 Key Questions to Ask

1. **What's the name of the medicine**, and what is it for?
2. **How and when do I take it**, and for how long?
3. **What side effects should I expect**, and what should I do about them?
4. **Should I take this medicine on an empty stomach** or with food?
5. **Should I avoid any activities, foods, drinks, alcohol**, or other medicines while taking this prescription?



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## 10 Key Questions to Ask, continued

6. **If it's a once-a-day dose**, is it best to take it in the morning or evening?
7. **Will this medicine work safely with other medicines I'm taking**, including over-the-counter-medicines?
8. **When should I expect the medicine to begin to work**, and how will I know if it's working?
9. **How should I store it?**
10. **Is there any additional written information I should read** about the medicine?



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## Additional Resources

Downloadable  
“Pocket  
Guide” of Tips  
& Questions

Resources for  
consumers &  
healthcare  
professionals

Videos

Posters



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