

Medication Adherence

Of all age groups, older persons with chronic diseases and conditions benefit the most from taking medications and risk the most from failing to take them properly. Among older adults the consequences of medication nonadherence may be more serious, less easily detected, and less easily resolved than in younger age groups.¹

\$100 billion estimated cost of nonadherence to a medication regimen²

125,000 estimated annual deaths in the US due to nonadherence with cardiovascular medications³

According to the American Heart Association, adherence to cardiovascular medication regimens among Americans falls short of the prescription.⁴

40% don't fill their prescription at all

12% don't take medication at all after they fill the prescription

28% stop taking their medication before it runs out

22% take less of the medication than is prescribed on the label

Among older adults the problem is enhanced by the complexities of aging. According to a 2002 study of 325 older persons (average age 78)⁵:

39% were unable to read the prescription label

67% do not fully understand the information given to them

45% are nonadherent as a result

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