



For Patients and Caregivers

- **Develop a routine.** Take your medication at the same time every day. Be sure to time doses with meals if the medicine needs to be taken with food, or between meals if directed to be taken on an empty stomach.
- **Be organized.** If taking multiple prescriptions, use a pill container that organizes pills by days of the week or even times of day. Keep the original container(s) with the dosage, patient and pharmacy information nearby in case you need to refer to it and for use when ordering refills. Some pill bottles may even have a built-in timer to remind you to take your medicine.
- **Plan ahead.** Keep a calendar of when you need to refill prescriptions, and be sure to bring enough medicine with you when travelling. Bring extra doses so you are prepared for any unexpected delays. Order your prescription refills early, especially when using a mail-order pharmacy so you don't run out of your medicine. Ask about delivery service as many pharmacies will now deliver your prescriptions right to your door.
- **Manage side effects.** Tell your healthcare team about any side effects you experience so they can help you work through them without reducing or stopping any necessary treatment.
- **There's an app for that.** The [NeedyMeds Storylines App](#) can schedule reminders to take medications, record missed doses or side effects and locate pharmacies. It even has the preloaded drug discount card and can connect you with other medication savings programs.
- **Manage your pain and your medicine safely** – Work with your doctor to create a plan to manage your pain to make sure you are getting the safest, most effective pain management possible. Discuss possible ways to [manage your pain without opioids](#). If it is determined that opioids are the best course of action, talk to your doctor about any and all side effects and concerns.
- **Safe disposal of unused medicines.** What should you do with medications that have not been used, or are expired and out of date? When they are no longer needed, it's important to dispose of them properly to avoid harm to others. Safe disposal greatly reduces the chance that others may accidentally or intentionally take the medicine that was not prescribed for them such as opioid medicines.