

Monthly appointments with pharmacists improve medication adherence

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Patients are more likely to take chronic medications when they meet monthly with pharmacists to coordinate medication schedules and treatments, according to a Virginia Commonwealth University study.

The study, published in the November/December issue of *The Journal of the American Pharmacists Association (JAPhA)*, described how [patient adherence](#) and persistence with chronic medications can be improved by allowing patients to meet with a pharmacist to solve medication-related problems and synchronize prescriptions to be dispensed on a single day of the month. The model is known as appointment-based medication synchronization (ABMS).

"This research shows appointment-based medication synchronization to be one of the most effective interventions available to help patients take their medications," said lead study author David A. Holdford, Ph.D., professor and vice-chair of graduate education at the Virginia Commonwealth University School of Pharmacy. "Widespread implementation in pharmacies across the U.S. can have a major impact on patient health."

Reasons why patients do not take their medications are complex and varied. Because of the range of factors in medication nonadherence, the most effective interventions typically are individualized to the unique needs of patients. Successful interventions combine diverse strategies that enhance patient access and convenience to medications, offer education and reminders, provide self-monitoring and feedback, engage

in mutual problem solving and offer a range of other approaches.

The complexity of a patient's therapy influences [medication adherence](#), and researchers generally agree that standardizing medication schedules can improve medication adherence and health outcomes. Consequently, several programs that simplify patient medication regimens currently are being offered in community pharmacies. Known by various names, the programs involve pharmacists working with patients to synchronize their chronic refill medications to come due on a single day of the month. By streamlining the refill process and by working together to resolve medication-related issues, this study provides evidence that [patients](#) have better adherence with their prescribed medications.

More information: japha.org/article.aspx?articleID=1765641

Provided by Virginia Commonwealth University

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