How to Improve Your Patients’ Antidepressant Adherence

As a primary care physician, you know that antidepressants are frequently prescribed in the primary care setting. You also know that patients often don’t take their medications as prescribed.

What can you do to improve your patients’ adherence to their treatment plans? First and foremost, develop rapport and engage the patient collaboratively in the development of their treatment plan.

Use your rapport to educate the patient on important issues that impact adherence, such as:

1. How long will it take for the medication to work?
2. How long should the patient expect to take the medication?
3. Why is it important to continue the medication?
4. What should the patient do if they have any questions, possible side effects or concerns?

Patients also benefit from information about common side effects, how long the side effects may last, and how to manage those side effects. This information should be simple and specific.

Sometimes patients benefit from referral to a behavioral health specialist. If you do refer your patient, be sure to coordinate care with the specialist, and follow up with the patient about his/her treatment, particularly regarding medications. As the primary care provider, you are in a powerful position to promote your patient’s adherence to treatment.

We can help PCPs coordinate behavioral health care for their patients. To learn more about our care management programs, which address both behavioral and medical conditions, you may call us at 800-221-5487 or go to the provider section of the website at www.psychcare.com.

Sources:
