

SHOULD YOU TAKE MONTHLY MEDICATION FOR YOUR SYMPTOMS?

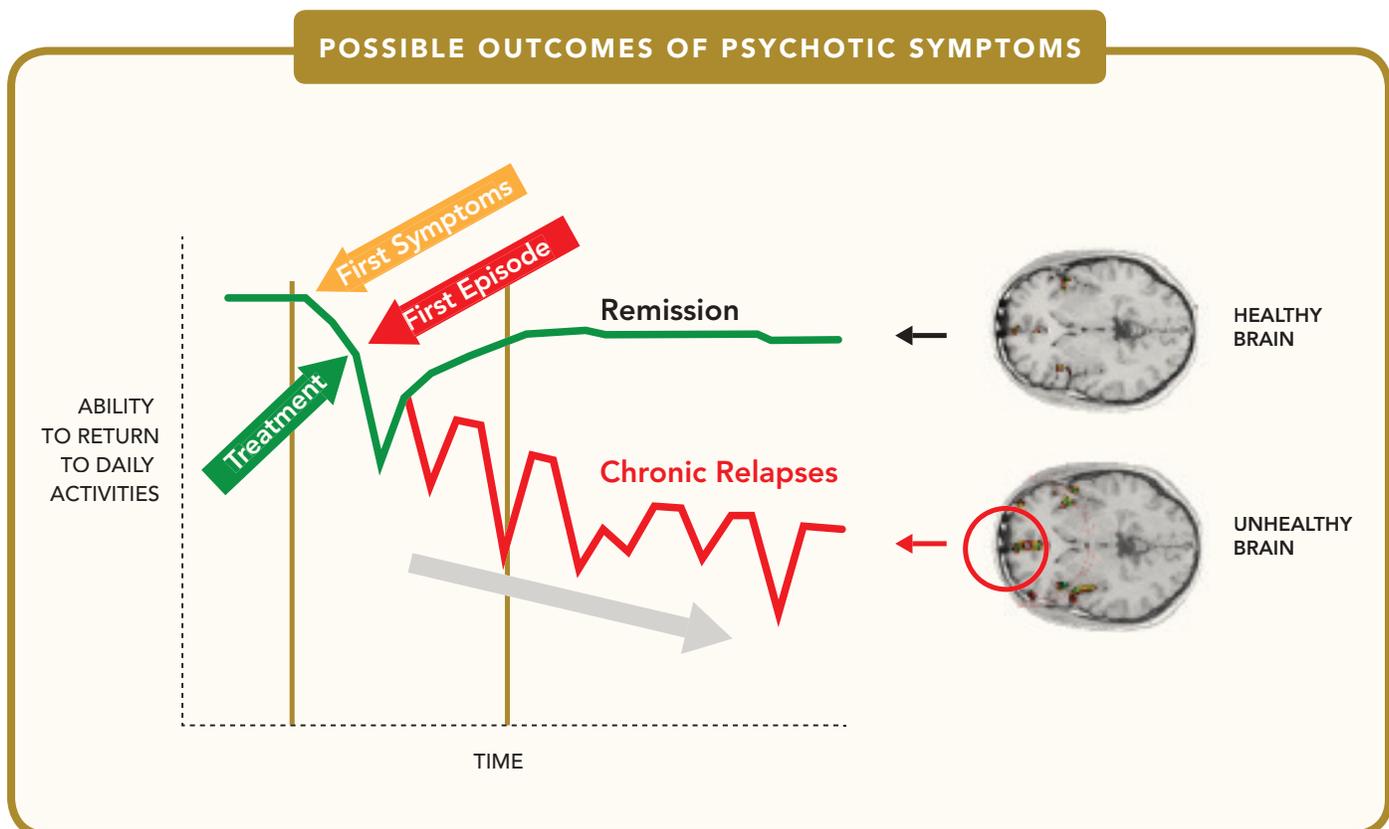
A consult decision aid for people with psychotic symptoms and healthcare professionals to discuss options

Why are you being offered monthly medication for your symptoms?

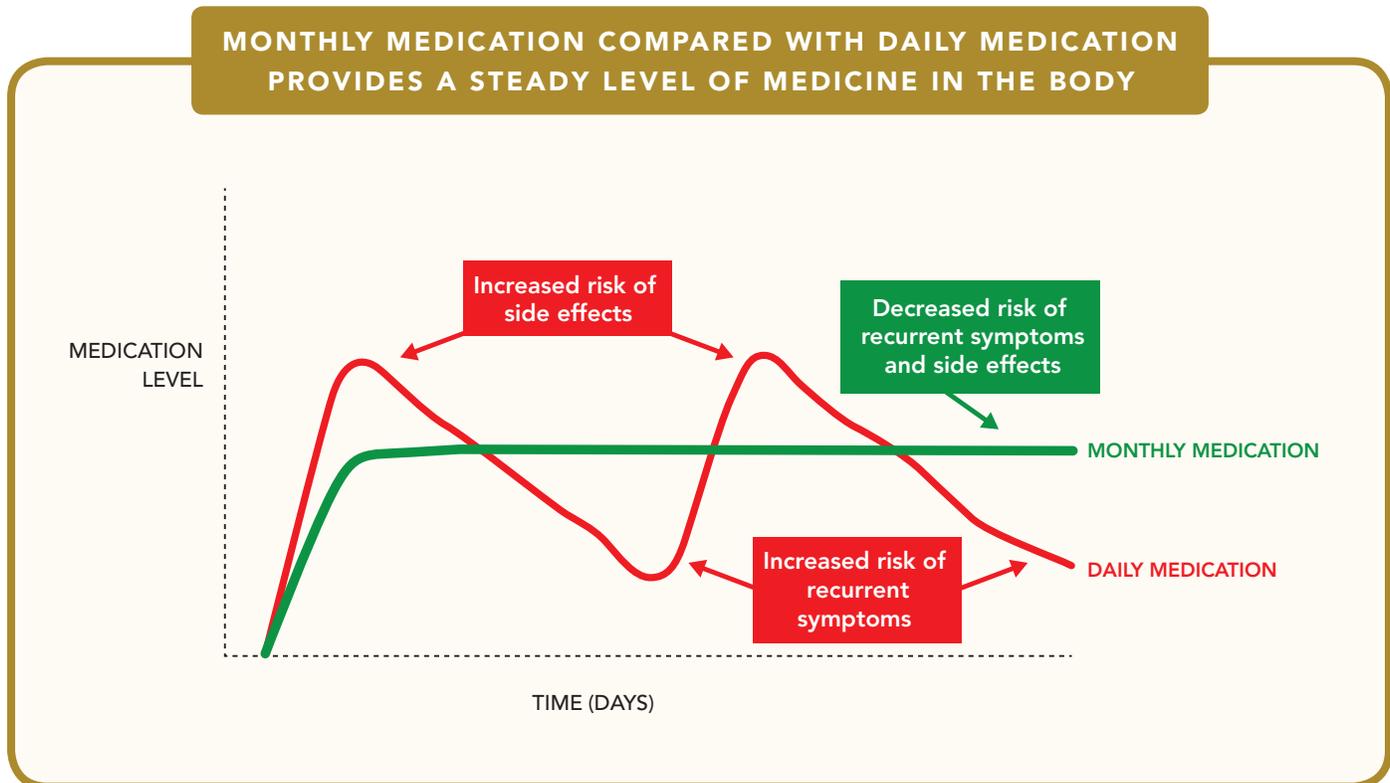
Your symptoms affect your ability to function well at home, school or work, and in your social life. Medication is a vital part of treating your symptoms and restoring your ability to take part in everyday activities. The main goal of taking medication is to help you stay well so you can stay out of hospital. Starting medication when symptoms first happen is the best way to do this.

Uninterrupted medication helps you stay well.¹

- Being well is known as remission. This is shown in the graph.
- If you do not take medication for your symptoms, you cannot function well. You may need to be in hospital often, as you will have symptoms (relapses). Having relapses affects your brain and prevents full recovery. This is shown in the graph.



- Taking medication for your symptoms monthly provides steady levels of medication in the body, as shown in the graph below.²
- This way of giving medication may decrease side effects, such as sleepiness and weight gain, compared with daily oral medication.^{2,3} Daily medication is shown in the graph below.
- Monthly medication may also increase effectiveness, as it decreases the risk of recurrent symptoms, compared with oral medication.
- With monthly medication, you receive less medication than with daily medication.



What are your options?

1. Take medication monthly
2. Do not take medication monthly. Talk to your doctor about daily oral medication

1. Lieberman JA, Koreen AR, Chakos M, et al. Factors influencing treatment response and outcome of first-episode schizophrenia: implications for understanding the pathophysiology of schizophrenia. *J Clin Psychiatry*. 1996;57(Suppl 9):5-9.

2. Sheehan JJ, Reilly KR, Fu D-J, Alphs L. Comparison of the peak-to-trough fluctuation in plasma concentration of long-acting injectable antipsychotics and their oral equivalents. *Innov Clin Neurosci*. 2012;9(7-8):17-23.

3. Taylor D. Psychopharmacology and adverse effects of antipsychotic long-acting injections: a review. *Br J Psychiatry* 2009;(Suppl 52):S13-9.

OPTIMA - OFFERING PATIENTS THERAPEUTIC INFORMATION ON MEDICATION ALTERNATIVES

BENEFITS & REASONS TO CHOOSE MONTHLY MEDICATION

What do you think of the benefits and risks of monthly medication?	DOES THIS MATTER?	
	YES	NO
When you take monthly medication rather than daily medication, you may get along at home better, be able to go to school or work, have a better social life and be more satisfied with treatment. ¹	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
People who switch to monthly medication say their symptoms, ability to function in their daily life, and satisfaction with treatment are much better with monthly medication. ^{2,3}	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Over two years, more people stay on treatment with monthly medication than daily medication. ⁴	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
If you need to be hospitalized with symptoms, you may spend much less time in hospital with monthly medication than with daily medication, about two-thirds less time. ⁵	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
People who forget to take their medication daily are more likely to have symptoms and more likely to be hospitalized than people taking monthly medication. ⁶	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Over a one-year period, people taking daily medication are three times more likely to be hospitalized with symptoms than people taking monthly medication. ¹	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Relapses make it harder for you to recover. Usually, fewer relapses happen with monthly than with daily medication. Long-term treatment results are better with monthly medication. ⁷	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Some monthly medication begins to work fast. ⁸ This means you may be able to recover faster and leave hospital sooner.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
When you take monthly medication, you have more steady and even levels of medication in the body and may have fewer side effects, such as sleepiness and weight gain, than with daily medication. ⁹	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
You receive less medication with monthly than with daily medication.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
When you take medication monthly, you do not need to worry about remembering to take medication daily.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Taking monthly treatment may be simpler for you than taking daily.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
If you forget to go for your monthly medication, we will reschedule your appointment with your treatment team to maintain your medication's effectiveness.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
People taking monthly medication better protect their brain from additional illness than people taking daily medication. ¹⁰	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Risks and reasons to avoid monthly medication

You may experience minimal discomfort with receiving your monthly medication by injection, but no more than with a vaccine. Most patients tolerate this very well.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Which option do you prefer? Take monthly medication Do not take monthly medication Unsure

What are your decision-making needs?

		YES	NO
Sure of myself	Do you feel sure about the best choice for you?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Understand information	Do you know the benefits and risks of taking or not taking monthly medication?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Risk-benefit ratio	Are you clear about which benefits and risks matter most to you?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Encouragement	Do you have enough support and advice to make a choice?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

REFERENCES

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