

Supplemental Appendix 1. Study Intervention Slides



Communicating about New Medications: 8 Myths

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“Doctors tell patients everything they need to know when prescribing medications”

AWARENESS

Doctors Prescribe More Than They Explain

Many doctors, a new study reports, prescribe medicine without explaining its purpose, discussing its side effects, offering instructions about its use or even mentioning its name.

Researchers audiotaped 45 doctors during their encounters with 909 patients, identifying 185 visits in which 243 medications that had not been used before by the patient were prescribed. The average age of the patients was 55, half of them



New York Times, October 3, 2006

Study prescribes more communication


A study published in the Archives of Internal Medicine shows that while doctors often describe a new prescription to patients, far less is communicated about its side effects and how long to take it.

Doctor communication to patients about new prescriptions, Mean of 244 medications (185 patients, 44 physicians)

New prescription described	97%
Purpose/justification for taking it	87
Generic/trade name stated	74
Frequency/timing of intake	58
Number of tablets/sprays	55
Adverse effects	35
Duration of intake	34

SOURCES: American Medical Association; Archives of Internal Medicine AP

Myth #2



“I’m going to scare patients if I tell them about a medication’s side effects”

Informing Patients of Drug Side Effects

Table II. Mean Number of Health Problems at First Revisit

Group	Mean number of problems reported	Mean number still being experienced	Mean number attributed to drug
Problems listed in PPI (N = 10)			
1	2.76	2.00	0.89
2	2.41	1.78	0.61
3	2.77	2.04	1.22
Nonlisted problems (N = 7)			
1	2.13	1.75	0.52
2	1.99	1.64	0.32
3	1.71	1.42	0.40
All problems probed (N = 17)			
1	4.89	3.76	1.40
2	4.39	3.42	0.93
3	4.48	3.46	1.62

Morris, L. A. and D. E. Kanouse. Informing patients about drug side effects. *J Behav Med*. 1982; 5(3): 363-73

Myth #3

“I don’t need to mention side effects if I don’t think the patient will have any”



Los Angeles Times,
October 2, 2006

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Patients Want Information about Side Effects

- Multiple focus groups studies
 - Patients consistently mentioned wanting side effect information
 - Often first topic mentioned when patients asked what information they wanted about their medications

Nair et al. Can Fam Physician 2002;48:104-110

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Physicians Can Prioritize Side Effects for Patients

- Physician in Los Angeles metropolitan area focus group
 - “...there may be 30 listed side effects, but really the physician is the one that has the experience to know which side effects are common and which side effects are dangerous...”

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Myth #4



“Patients will get all the information they need from the pharmacist”

Pharmacists are NOT Giving Patients Complete Information

- Cross-sectional study
- 306 community pharmacies in 8 states
- Trained shoppers acting as patients
 - 63% given oral drug information
- Counseling varied significantly
 - Pharmacist age
 - Pharmacy business
 - Intensity of state regulation

Svarstad B et al. Patient counseling provided in community pharmacies: effects of state regulation, pharmacist age, and busyness. J Am Pharm Assoc. 2004; 44: 22-29

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Myth #5



“Patients are okay with talking solely to the pharmacist about their medications”

Older Patients May Not Want to Talk to Pharmacists about Medications

Patients asked if they discuss their medication with a pharmacist

Response	Number	%
Yes	3	<1
Occasionally	17	4
Sometimes	2	<1
Never, and would not	344	79
No/not usually	33	7
Housebound	7	2
No medication	13	3
No response	16	4
Total	435	

Jones D et al. Use of pharmacists by older people in the community. Arch Gerontol and Geriatr. 1997; 24: 9-13

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Many Patients Prefer to Talk to their Physicians about Medications

- Focus Groups of patients 65 and older in the Los Angeles metropolitan area:
 - “I think it should be the doctor because he’s the only one who knows about the ten prescriptions as a group that you’re taking. The pharmacist doesn’t know.”
 - “I trust the doctor more than the pharmacist, so it would be better all around...if the doctor would take two extra minutes and explain...the reaction...”

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Myth #6

“Patients will ask if they have questions”

Communication Patterns of Older Patients

- More physician-dominated visits
 - Less physician-patient concordance
- Less assertive
- Ask fewer questions
- Provide less information

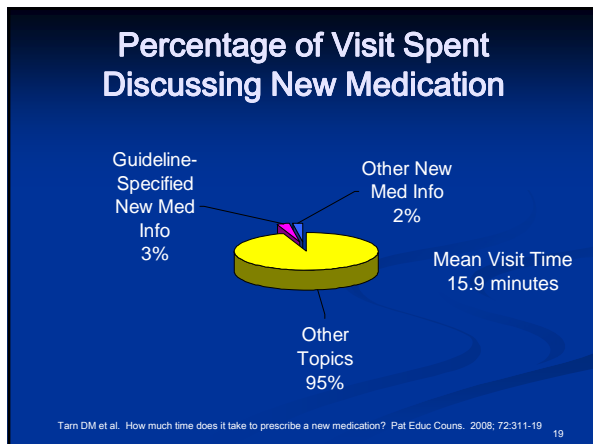
Greene M et al. Gerontologist. 1989 Dec;29(6):808-13; Tennstedt SL. Clin Geriatr Med. 2000. 16(1): p. 61-70. ix.

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Myth #7



“It takes too long to talk to patients about a new prescription”



Myth #8

“It doesn’t matter what we tell patients about their medications”


Good Physician Communication is Important for Patient Adherence

- Study of 141 patients receiving 347 old and new medications
- Patients receiving high instruction:
 - 62% had better understanding of how their drugs were supposed to be used
 - 46% were non-compliant (pill count within 1 week after the visit)
- Patients receiving low instruction:
 - 60% made at least one error when asked how drugs were supposed to be used
 - 71% were non-compliant

Svarstad BL. The Doctor-Patient Encounter: An observational study of communication and outcome. Sociology, Ph.D. Dissertation. 1974. University of Wisconsin: 1-338 21

Medication Quality Indicators-I

- Patients should learn to ask about the following concerning a new medication:
 - Name, brand vs. generic
 - Purpose
 - How and when to take? For how long?
 - Special instructions?
 - Possible side effects and what to do if they occur
 - Interactions with other medications or supplements



National Council on Patient Information and Education (NCPIE) and AHRQ Patient Fact Sheet (20 Tips to Help Prevent Medical Errors) 22

Medication Quality Indicators--II

- When a new medication is prescribed to a vulnerable elder, the patient should be educated about:
 - Purpose of the drug
 - How to take it
 - Expected side effects / adverse reactions

Assessing Care of Vulnerable Elders quality indicator (2001, 2007) 23

Proposed Interaction

- Physicians prescribing a new medication should discuss:
 - Medication name
 - Purpose
 - Directions for use
 - Duration of use
 - Possible side effects

Sample Interactions (1)

Dr: Okay, let's have you stop the Tolinase.
Pt: Can we go to something else?
Dr: Yeah, Glucophage.
Pt: I wish they'd use English. You guys have a secret code.
Dr: Yeah, actually this one we like, this is a newer medicine, it's a very good one.
Pt: Good. That's great. See if it clears it up.

Tarn DM et al. J of Clinical Outcomes Management. 2007; 14(7): 398-404

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Sample Interactions (2)

Dr: Also, I am going to give you an inhaler.
Pt: An inhaler?
Dr: Yeah, for the asthma.
Pt: So, this is asthma then?
Dr: Um hum.
Pt: Oh great.
Dr: Reactive airway disease. Asthma is a dirty word to me.
Pt: I know.
Dr: Okay.

Tarn DM et al. J of Clinical Outcomes Management. 2007; 14(7): 398-404

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Sample Interactions (3)

Dr: Let me give you a, a short course of some antibiotics for the yellow stuff cause I think you've got an infection sittin' on top of all this. Give you the six pill variety. Short and sweet.
Pt: OK. So you only have to take six pills?
Dr: Yup, only once a day. Five days, you're done. (Ensuing unrelated conversation).

Tarn DM et al. J of Clinical Outcomes Management. 2007; 14(7): 398-404

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Proposed Interaction

- Physicians prescribing a new medication should discuss:
 - Medication name
 - Purpose
 - Directions for use
 - Duration of use
 - Possible side effects
- May add adherence comment

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Example of Proposed Interaction

"I'm giving you a prescription for [ciprofloxacin], which is for [your urinary tract infection]. [It's okay for you to take this with your other pills]."
"You are going to take [1 pill twice a day, for 7 days]."
"The most common side effects include nausea and diarrhea, but it's okay to keep taking the drug. Let me know if you get any heel pain while you're taking the medication."
"Remember, it's *really* important for you to take 1 pill twice a day for 7 days."

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Role Play

- Role-play scenarios
 - Statin
 - Anti-hypertensive
 - Antibiotic

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Online Supplementary Material

Tarn DM, Paterniti DA, Orosz DK, Tseng CH, Wenger NS. Intervention to enhance communication about newly prescribed medications. *Ann Fam Med*. 2013;11(1):28-36.

<http://www.annfammed.org/content/full/11/1/28>

Supplemental Appendix 2. Patient Intervention Handout



*If Your Doctor Gives You
A New Medication Today,
Make Sure You Know:*

- What is the name of the medicine?

- What is it for?

- How much and how often do I take it?

- How long do I take it?

- What are potential side effects?

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