



Prescription and Lifestyle Compliance

Many people underestimate the importance of taking certain steps to living a healthier life. For example, more than half of all Americans with chronic illnesses do not follow their doctor's medical and lifestyle guidance. Non-compliance results in tens of thousands of increased hospital stays, delayed recoveries from illness, and even death. By taking medication exactly as prescribed, and following recommended lifestyle changes, you can get the full benefit from your treatment plan.

The American Heart Association provides the following statistics:

Prescription Compliance

- Almost 29 percent of Americans stop taking their medicine before it runs out.
- 22 percent of Americans take less of the medication than is prescribed on the label.
- 12 percent of Americans don't fill their prescription at all.
- 12 percent of Americans don't take medication at all after they buy their prescription.
- The number one problem in treating illness today is patients' failure to take prescription medications correctly, regardless of patient age.
- 10 percent of all hospital admissions are the result of patients failing to take medications correctly, regardless of patient age.
- 23 percent of all nursing home admissions are due to patients failing to take medications accurately.
- At any given time, regardless of age group, up to 59 percent of those on five or more medications are taking them improperly.
- The average length of stay in hospitals due to medication non-compliance is 4.2 days.

Lifestyle Compliance

- Only about 50 percent of men and 68 percent of women recognize regular medical checkups as important to staying well.
- From 1997 – 2001, an estimated 438,000 Americans died each year of smoking-related illnesses.
- Americans eat about 33 percent of their calories from fat, increasing their risk of developing high cholesterol.
- About 142 million American adults age 20 and older are considered overweight or obese. Of these, more than 67.3 million are considered obese.
- 48.4 percent of American adults age 20 and older have cholesterol levels that are too high (200 mg/dL and over).
- Only about 30 percent of American adults report regular leisure-time physical activity.

Source: American Heart Association

TeamHealth Wellness will reimburse the annual wellness exam co-pay for medical insurance participants. Additionally, mail-order asthma, diabetes, and cardiac medications are covered at a 20% co-insurance rate, as opposed to the 25% co-insurance rate for other mail order prescriptions. Go to teamhealth.com/wellness and click "Medical and Prescription Compliance" for more information.