

“Adherence to (or compliance with) a medication regimen is generally defined as the extent to which patients take medications as prescribed by their health care providers. The word ‘adherence’ is preferred by many health care providers, because ‘compliance’ suggests that the patient is passively following the doctor’s orders and that the treatment plan is not based on a therapeutic alliance or contract established between the patient and the physician....Regardless of which word is preferred, it is clear that the full benefit of the many effective medications that are available will be achieved only if patients follow prescribed treatment regimens reasonably closely.”

- Osterberg, L and Blaschke, T, “Adherence to Medication,” New England Journal of Medicine, Aug. 4, 2005, p. 487.