

Patient information factsheet

What should I do if I miss a dose of my medicine?

Forgetting to take your medicines at the normal time means they might not work as well as they should.

If you regularly forget to take your medicines you should speak to a pharmacist as they may have suggestions to help you.

If you forget to take your medicine you should:

Read the information leaflet that came with your medicine.

This usually has information on missed doses.

Be careful not to take doses too close together because you might get side effects. Don't double your next dose to catch up.

If you don't have the leaflet that came with your medicine, or you're still not sure, ask a pharmacist.

Important information

There are some medicines that need special care or have special instructions. **Always** get advice from a pharmacist or your doctor if you miss a dose of:

- epilepsy medicines
- warfarin
- insulin (check your blood sugar and follow any specific instructions given to you by your doctor or diabetes nurse)
- hormonal contraception 'the pill'
- once-weekly methotrexate
- medicines for cancer
- medicines to prevent rejection of a transplant

Otherwise, the general advice is:

If the dose is less than 2 hours late

Take the missed dose now.

It is usually safe to take most medicines up to 2 hours late.

As a one-off, it is ok to disregard any warning about taking your medicines before or after meals – it is more important to take your medicine. Under normal circumstances though, you should follow the advice that came with your medicines carefully.

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If the dose is more than 2 hours late

The advice depends on how often you take your medicine:

If you take your medicine once or twice a day

Take the missed dose now, as long as the next dose is not due within a few hours.

If you take your medicine more than twice a day

Do not take the missed dose. It is usually safer to skip it.

After missing your dose continue to take your medicine as normal.

If you have any questions about your medicines

Speak to your pharmacist

Your local pharmacist (chemist) can provide expert advice on medicines.

Our medicines helpline

If you are a patient of University Hospital Southampton NHS Foundation Trust* and have questions about your medicines after your hospital visit, you can call our medicines helpline on **023 8120 6907** (Monday to Friday 9am to 6.30pm) or email medicinesinformation@uhs.nhs.uk

*includes Southampton General Hospital; Royal South Hants or Princess Anne Hospital; Countess Mountbatten House and New Forest Birth Centre.

If you need a translation of this document, an interpreter or a version in large print, Braille or audio, please call 023 8120 4688.

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