

An overview of how schizophrenia is treated, how medications work, and how to manage side effects that may occur.

*Lilly*

TEAM SOLUTIONS™

# Understanding Your Treatment

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## INSTRUCTOR'S GUIDE

This instructor's guide and the corresponding workbook have been prepared in consultation with a number of leading authorities in the field of treatment of schizophrenia. They are designed and intended to be used with patients being treated for symptoms of schizophrenia as educational materials to supplement information provided by the patient's physician. This instructor's guide does not substitute for appropriate medical treatment and counseling. The material may be useful in answering questions about schizophrenia or medications. It may not answer all questions. Remember to remind patients that if they should have questions about their medications or particular treatment, or if they think they are having any possible unwanted effects, they should consult with their physician.

## Instructor's Notes

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### Goals for This Workbook

After completing this workbook, individuals will be familiar with:

1. The role of medication as part of treatment
2. How medications work
3. Possible side effects of medication
4. What to do if side effects occur

### Note to Instructor

Duplicate the Knowledge Assessment (pre- and post-test) and have your clients complete it before starting this workbook. This will help you identify the subject areas in which your clients may need more help. When you've completed the workbook, have your clients complete the same Knowledge Assessment once again, so that you can measure how much they've learned and can identify subject areas that may require review. You will find the Knowledge Assessment at the end of these Instructor's Notes.

## Page 2—Newer Treatments Are Helping People Feel Better

### Suggested Approach:

After reading this page, facilitate discussion about:

- New medications or treatment approaches they've used
- Other new medications or treatments they've heard about

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## Page 3—At First, Most People Don't Know Why They're Not Feeling Right

### Objectives for This Section:

After reading this section, individuals will be able to:

1. Identify the typical age range for onset of schizophrenia
2. Verbalize an understanding of how confusing the early stages of onset can be
3. Discuss how hard it is—and how long it takes—for most people to realize they have an illness

### Suggested Approach:

After reading this page, encourage individuals to discuss:

- How old they were when they first began having symptoms
- What the early stages of onset were like for them (before they realized what was wrong)
- When they were first told their diagnosis
- How long it was before they accepted their illness and what event(s) helped them accept their illness

### Potential Problem:

An individual has not yet accepted his or her illness.

#### *Suggested Response:*

1. Empathize with their feelings (fear? anger? sadness?)
2. Normalize their experience—everyone goes through a time of doubting when faced with a serious illness
3. Acknowledge the importance of being skeptical for a while
4. Express belief in their ability to come to terms with their illness in their own time, when they're ready
5. Move on

## Page 4—How Treatment Can Help

### Objectives for This Section:

After completing this section, individuals will be able to:

1. Express an understanding of how symptoms can make it difficult to achieve goals
2. Verbalize how treatment can help a person achieve goals

### Suggested Approach:

Before completing the written exercises, encourage individuals to discuss:

- Symptoms they used to have that are relieved by their medicine now
- Problems those symptoms used to cause in their daily lives
- The importance of keeping their symptoms under control so they can reach their personal goals

### Potential Problem:

An individual is just now taking medication for the first time or they're still having a lot of active symptoms in spite of taking medication.

*Suggested Response:*

In the “Suggested Approach” above, discuss present symptoms and their resulting problems.

Before completing the written exercises, encourage individuals to discuss:

- Symptoms they're having that they want their medication to control
- Problems those symptoms are causing in their daily life
- The importance of managing those symptoms so they can reach their personal goals

Remind patients to discuss with their physician any questions they have about their medications or any unwanted effects they may have.

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## Page 5—What Your Overall Treatment May Consist Of

### Objectives for This Section:

After reading this section, individuals will be able to:

1. Identify the various components of treatment
2. Verbalize and understand the general purpose of each

**Suggested Approach:**

After reading the page, encourage individuals to discuss:

- Which treatment components they're involved in now or have had in the past
- The general purpose of each component of treatment
- The benefits of getting involved in more than one component of treatment

**Page 6—Your Treatment Plan****Objectives for This Section:**

After reading this section, individuals will be able to:

1. Verbalize the importance of medication
2. Identify questions they have about their medication

**Suggested Approach:**

After reading this page, encourage individuals to discuss:

- Why medicine plays an important role in their treatment
- What they'd like to learn about their medication

Remind patients to discuss with their physician any questions they have about their medications or any unwanted effects they may have.

**Page 7—What to Expect From Your Medicine****Objectives for This Section:**

After reading this section, individuals will be able to:

1. Identify the purpose of medication
2. State how long it takes for medication to be effective
3. Discuss the importance of continuing medication

**Suggested Approach:**

Before reading the first paragraph, encourage individuals to discuss:

- The purpose of medication
- How long it usually takes for medication to be fully effective
- What's likely to happen if someone stops taking their medication

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## Page 8—How Do Medicines Work to Relieve Your Symptoms?

### Objectives for This Section:

After reading this section, individuals will be able to:

1. Identify the three steps the brain uses to manage information
2. Express an understanding of the role of brain chemicals in managing information
3. Verbalize an understanding of how medications work
4. Identify why stopping medication is likely to result in relapse

### Suggested Approach:

After reading this page, encourage individuals to discuss:

- Personal examples of having trouble with managing information
- The role of brain chemicals in managing information
- What happens when brain chemicals get out of balance
- The diagram of the brain

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## Page 9—Messages Travel on Nerve Pathways, Brain Chemicals Carry Messages From One Nerve Cell to the Next, What Does It Mean?

### Suggested Approach:

As you discuss the material on this page, you may find it helpful to use this analogy: Brain chemicals carry a message from one nerve cell to another nerve cell, just as a postcard or letter would carry a message from one person to another through the mail.

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## Page 10—Messages Are Carried Along Pathways of Brain Nerve Cells

### Suggested Approach:

Depending on the cognitive abilities of the learners, you may want to use some additional analogies to help them grasp the concepts shown in the illustrations:

- Pretend you live across the street from the post office.
- The first nerve ending is the post office.
- The second nerve ending is your house.
- The space between nerve endings is the street between the post office and your house.
- The vesicles are the mail sacks that contain postcards and letters.
- The postcards and letters carry messages to people's homes.
- The receptor is the mail slot in your front door.

You are waiting for a letter from the post office. It's a really important message. But you can't receive the message until the letter is delivered to your mail slot.

Just as a postcard or letter is taken out of the sack and delivered across the street to your mail slot, brain chemicals leave their vesicles and deliver their messages to the receptors on the next nerve cell.

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### **Page 11—How Messages Are Carried From One Brain Nerve Cell to Another**

#### **Suggested Approach:**

Depending on how well the learners grasped the analogy, you may find it helpful to:

- Repeat the analogy using the diagrams
- Ask the individuals to explain what the diagrams illustrate
- Re-explain what the diagrams illustrate without using the analogy

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### **Page 12—When the Brain Chemicals Get Out of Balance**

#### **Suggested Approach:**

Depending again on how well the learners grasped the analogy, you may find it helpful to:

- Suggest they imagine what it would be like if:
  - Everyone starts sending them 50 copies of postcards, letters, magazines, and bills
  - The post office starts delivering truckloads of letters to their home
  - The postal worker starts pushing the mail through lots of open windows and doors around the house
  - The postal worker starts leaving big piles of letters outside their windows and doors because they can't get it all in the house
- Facilitate discussion about how hard it would be to deal with so much mail:
  - You'd get way behind on paying bills and sending letters
  - You'd be so overwhelmed with mail that you couldn't read all of it
  - It would be hard to sort out the junk mail from the important mail
  - You'd probably accidentally save some junk mail and throw away some important mail
  - You'd probably get really overwhelmed, tired, and worn out from trying to manage so much mail—and yet the post office would just keep delivering more and more piles of mail to you

**Page 13****Suggested Approach:**

After reading the page, encourage individuals to discuss:

- Personal examples of the symptoms mentioned
- The difference between being lazy and being overwhelmed by the illness

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**Page 14 – How Your Medicine Works****Suggested Approach:**

Depending again on the level of comprehension of the learners, you might find it helpful to discuss the text in terms of the same analogy:

- Ask what they'd do if a postal worker was pushing piles of mail through open windows and doors at their home
- Explain that medications block the windows and doors and keep extra copies of mail from getting in
- Comment that there's still too much mail being delivered, but the medicine blocks the entrances and keeps some of the extra copies from getting in the house
- Suggest that when this happens, they have less mail to deal with, so they don't feel so overwhelmed and their brain can work better
- Reiterate that it takes several weeks for the medication to close all the windows and doors

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**Page 14 – Diagrams****Suggested Approach:**

Depending on how well the learners grasped the analogy, you may find it helpful to:

- Repeat the analogy using the diagrams
- Ask the individuals to explain what the diagrams illustrate
- Re-explain what the diagrams illustrate without using the analogy

## Page 15—What Would Happen if You Stopped Taking Your Medicine?

### Suggested Approach:

Depending on how well the learners grasped the analogy, you may find it helpful to:

- Ask what would happen if they opened all the windows and doors again
- Help them draw parallel conclusions with what happens if they stop taking medications that are blocking receptor sites
- Explain that for now, we haven't found another way to solve the problem
  - All we can do is block the windows and doors
  - We haven't figured out how to keep everyone from sending so many copies of each message
  - We haven't figured out how to make the post office deliver just one copy of each letter
- Re-emphasize the importance of taking medication daily to keep the doors and windows blocked

## Page 16—About Your Medicines

### Objectives for This Section:

After completing this section, individuals will be able to:

1. Identify potential problems caused by not having enough medication in their system
2. Express an understanding of the relationship between dose and severity of side effects
3. Verbalize an understanding that nonprescription medications can make symptoms worse
4. Identify some of the most common antipsychotic medications used to treat schizophrenia
5. Discuss the medications they've taken in the past
6. Identify the medications they're taking now



**Suggested Approach:**

After reading the page, encourage individuals to discuss:

- What might happen if doses are missed, if the dosage they're taking is not high enough, or if they stop their medicine. Discuss personal experiences.  
*Answer:* Their symptoms may not go away, or symptoms may get worse (when doses are missed, some of the windows and doors open up again)
- Why it's important to check with the doctor or pharmacist before taking nonprescription drug products with their medication  
*Answer:* Some medicines (even nonprescription ones) may prevent the medicine from blocking the receptors and allow more messages to get through (send more mail)

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**Page 17— Medicine(s) You're Taking at This Time****Suggested Approach:**

As instructor, you may want to plan ahead for this lesson by:

- Looking in each person's chart and writing down the names of each medication the participants take, the dosage that's prescribed, and when they are supposed to take it
- Suggesting people bring all their medication bottles with them for this class

If you weren't able to plan ahead for this lesson, you may want to do the preparation after class and come back to this page at the start of your next session. That way you can help individuals fill in the information they didn't know from memory.

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**Page 18****Suggested Approach:**

As participants complete the written exercises, you may want to encourage them to:

- Think back to the symptoms they were having before they began taking any medication
- Get input from family, friends, and members of their treatment team

Remind them to talk to their doctor about any questions they may have regarding their medication, symptoms, or possible unwanted effects.

## Page 19—Knowing About Your Medicine’s *Unwanted* Effects

### Objectives for This Section:

After reading this section, individuals will be able to:

1. Define what “side effects” means in their own words
2. Express an understanding that two people who are taking the same medication may not have the same side effects
3. Verbalize importance of talking to the doctor about side effects **instead of** making medication changes on their own



### Suggested Approach:

Before reading the page, encourage individuals to:

- Define “side effects”
- Identify side effects they are currently experiencing
- Report examples of side effects they’ve experienced in the past
- Discuss why two people who are taking the same medication may not have the same side effects
- Give personal examples of things they’ve done in the past to get rid of side effects that bothered them
- Identify reasons it wouldn’t be wise to change their medication on their own when they have problems with side effects
- Discuss what they should do when they have problems with side effects

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## Pages 20-21—Possible Side Effects of Your Medicine

### Objective for This Section:

After completing this section, individuals will be able to:

1. Identify some common side effects that can be uncomfortable or upsetting

### Suggested Approach:

Before doing the checklist, encourage individuals to:

- Remember to check only the side effects that they’ve had in the past month
- Ask for clarification about any that aren’t clear

**Page 21****Potential Problem:**

An individual gives an answer to the written exercise that seems to have no logical connection to managing side effects.

*Suggested Response:*

1. Ask the individual to explain how the solution is connected to the problem
2. If the explanation doesn't seem to make sense, thank them for explaining it to you
3. If the person doesn't give you an explanation, tell them not to worry about it
4. Move on

**Pages 22-25—How to Manage Side Effects That May Be Bothering You****Objective for This Section:**

After reading this section, individuals will be able to:

1. Identify ways to manage some common side effects

**Suggested Approach:**

While reading through the ways to manage side effects, encourage individuals to:

- Discuss how the tips have or have not been useful for them in the past
- Identify tips they plan to use for current side effects
- Discuss possible unwanted effects with their doctor

Remind them that if they choose to start an exercise program, they should talk to their doctor first.

**Page 23****Potential Problem:**

An individual drinks large amounts of soda or tea to relieve their dry mouth.

*Suggested Response:*

1. Ask the individual how well that solution has worked for them
2. Ask the individual if they've ever heard of the effect of caffeine on medication and symptoms
3. Teach them about the negative effects of caffeine on symptoms and medication
  - caffeine is very likely to make their symptoms worse—may increase the number of messages sent (may cause the brain to “send more mail”)
  - caffeine may interfere with their medication and make it less effective (they may end up having to take more medication to “close all the windows and doors”)
4. Move on

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## Pages 26-27—Serious Side Effects

### Objectives for This Section:

After reading this section, individuals will be able to:

1. Identify some side effects that are serious, dangerous, or life threatening
2. Verbalize an understanding that they should call their doctor immediately if they ever have any of the serious side effects

### Suggested Approach:

While reading through the serious side effects, encourage individuals to:

- Discuss personal experiences with any of these serious side effects
- Refer any complex or technical questions to the person's nurse or doctor

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## Page 28—A Word About Drug Interactions

### Objectives for This Section:

After reading this section, individuals will be able to:

1. Verbalize the importance of talking with their doctor or pharmacist before taking any nonprescription drugs
2. Identify the potential problems of using street drugs or drinking alcohol

### Suggested Approach:

After reading the first two paragraphs, encourage individuals to:

- Discuss personal experiences with drug interactions
- Discuss the importance of checking with their doctor or pharmacist **before** buying a nonprescription drug

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## Page 28—Drug Interactions With Alcohol and Street Drugs

### Suggested Approach:

Before reading this section, encourage individuals to:

- Identify potential problems of drinking alcohol or using street drugs
- Discuss personal examples of problems caused by drinking alcohol or using street drugs



## Pages 29-31—Test Yourself: How Much Do You Know About Your Medicine?

### Objective for This Section:

After completing this section, individuals will be able to:

1. Identify correct responses to common questions about medication

### Suggested Approach:

After reading each question, encourage individuals to:

- Give a verbal answer
- Explain their answer
- Read the answer provided

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### Options for Getting Closure at the End of the Workbook:

- Help the person summarize the main points of the workbook
- Ask the person what parts of the workbook were most helpful
- Ask the person to identify two things they learned from the workbook
- Turn to the Contents page and help them identify one main point for each topic



It's time to complete the Knowledge Assessment. Please note that the Knowledge Assessment that follows is an original document that will need to be duplicated for your use.

## Knowledge Assessment

For each question or statement, circle the best answer:

1. **Schizophrenia usually appears when people reach their teens or early to mid-twenties.** (pg. 3)
  - a. True
  - b. False
  
2. **Without treatment, symptoms of schizophrenia tend to get better over time.** (pg. 3)
  - a. True
  - b. False
  
3. **Many people have problems for months or years before they discover they have an illness—and that treatment can help them feel better.** (pg. 3)
  - a. True
  - b. False
  
4. **Some people have a hard time accepting their illness.** (pg. 3)
  - a. True
  - b. False
  
5. **Medicine is LEAST likely to help you reach your goals by:** (pg. 4)
  - a. Helping you sleep better
  - b. Improving your concentration and relieving your symptoms
  - c. Helping you feel more relaxed and less fearful
  - d. Making you smarter

- 6. Depending on your needs, your treatment is LEAST likely to involve:** (pg. 5)
- One or more medications and psychoeducation
  - Counseling and rehabilitation
  - Therapeutic recreation and support groups
  - Permanent hospitalization and custodial care
- 7. Your medicine will work quickly. You can expect to feel better overnight and your symptoms should go away in just a few days.** (pg. 7)
- True
  - False
- 8. The most important thing you can do to keep your symptoms from returning is:** (pg. 7)
- Take your medicine on the days you feel like you need it
  - Cut down on your medicine if you start having side effects
  - Keep taking your medicine every day, exactly as it is prescribed
  - Take twice as much medicine when you have a bad day
- 9. Medicines are believed to work to relieve your symptoms by:** (pg. 8)
- Adjusting the imbalance of chemicals in your brain
  - Sedating you so you can't cause any problems
  - Changing the structure of your brain
  - Putting pieces of the brain together so the messages make sense

10. Messages are carried from one brain cell to the next by: (pg. 8)
- a. Brain waves
  - b. Brain chemicals
  - c. Mitochondria
  - d. Electrodes
11. Your brain uses brain chemicals to help you receive information, process information, and make decisions. (pg. 8)
- a. True      b. False
12. When your brain chemicals get out of balance, your brain may only get bits and pieces of information. (pg. 8)
- a. True      b. False
13. Another name for “brain chemicals” is: (pg. 9)
- a. Ventricles
  - b. Synapses
  - c. Neurotransmitters
  - d. Basal ganglia
14. A message is sent from one brain cell to another when brain chemicals: (pg. 11)
- a. Connect with a receptor site
  - b. Are broken down
  - c. Are stored in vesicles
  - d. Go back to their own nerve cell for storage

15. **Brain chemicals that are out of balance may cause confused thinking and unusual sensations such as hearing or seeing things.** (pg. 13)
- a. True      b. False
16. **All medicines are exactly the same so it doesn't matter which one you take.** (pg. 14)
- a. True      b. False
17. **One way medicine works is by:** (pg. 14)
- a. Increasing the number of receptors
- b. Decreasing the number of vesicles
- c. Blocking excess brain chemicals so they can't connect with the next brain cell
- d. Making the synapse smaller
18. **As the medicine begins to take effect, your symptoms are likely to:** (pg. 14)
- a. Get worse
- b. Stay the same
- c. Get better
- d. None of the above
19. **Once your brain chemistry is adjusted, you don't need any more medicine.** (pg. 15)
- a. True      b. False

20. **As long as you take the right number of pills each day, it doesn't matter when you take them.** (pg. 16)
- a. True      b. False
21. **If your dosage is too low, or you miss doses, there may not be enough medicine to keep your symptoms under control.** (pg. 16)
- a. True      b. False
22. **All side effects that are annoying are also serious.** (pg. 22)
- a. True      b. False
23. **If you have side effects you should just take fewer pills each day.** (pg. 22)
- a. True      b. False
24. **Serious side effects that need immediate medical attention include:**  
(pgs. 26-27)
- a. Constipation, dizziness, drowsiness, and weight gain
- b. Dry mouth, restlessness, and changes in sexual function
- c. Skin rash, being slowed down, blurry vision, and difficulty urinating
- d. Muscle stiffness with high fever and confusion, seizures, and uncontrollable muscle spasms
25. **Some drugs you can buy without a prescription can cause a bad reaction with your medicine.** (pg. 28)
- a. True      b. False

26. **Alcohol and street drugs won't interfere with your medicine or make your symptoms worse.** (pg. 28)
- a. True      b. False
27. **If you were taking a medicine five years ago and it didn't help your symptoms, nothing more can be done.** (pg. 29)
- a. True      b. False
28. **People who stop their medicine often end up back in the hospital.** (pg. 29)
- a. True      b. False
29. **It's not necessary to take your medicine if you are taking vitamins or seeing a therapist for psychotherapy.** (pg. 30)
- a. True      b. False
30. **Even if you take your medicine every day, you might still have symptoms.** (pg. 30)
- a. True      b. False

## Answer Key

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1. a	11. a	21. a
2. b	12. a	22. b
3. a	13. c	23. b
4. a	14. a	24. d
5. d	15. a	25. a
6. d	16. b	26. b
7. b	17. c	27. b
8. c	18. c	28. a
9. a	19. b	29. b
10. b	20. b	30. a

