



Teens

How to Fill Prescriptions and Schedule Appointments

There are many small but very important responsibilities you will start taking care of as you grow older. You will probably need to learn to do your own laundry or change a flat tire on your car. Another responsibility for teens with primary immunodeficiency (PI) is knowing how to fill prescriptions and schedule medical appointments.

Filling Prescriptions

The prescription procedure starts in the physician's office or health clinic.

- Your physician needs to know what medications you are presently taking so the medicines don't interact negatively. You need to speak openly and honestly so the physician is fully aware of all the medications you are taking, even over-the-counter medicines.
- Some physicians may give you a written prescription, but most physicians fill prescriptions electronically. If the prescription is filled electronically, they will ask you which pharmacy you would like to use.
- Before you fill your prescription, you will need to find out if it is covered by your insurance. You don't want any surprises when you go to pick up your prescription. If it is covered by your insurance, bring your insurance card to the pharmacy. The pharmacy staff may ask you to leave your card while they are filling your prescription so they can verify your insurance.
- The pharmacy staff may ask if you have any questions about the medication or if you want to speak with the pharmacist. They may have you sign a waiver if you choose not to ask questions or speak with a pharmacist. You can always call the pharmacy later if you come up with a question.
- Most prescriptions come with an information sheet from the manufacturer. This will provide you with useful information like when is the best time to take the medicine and the possible side effects.
- If you notice even minor side effects, contact your physician immediately. Pharmacists are also trained in the science of how medications interact, so they can be helpful in this situation.
- Don't wait until you're completely out of medicine to order a refill. When you have about one week's worth of medicine left, order a refill. The procedure should be easier the second time around because the pharmacy has all the necessary information. This can usually be done over the phone. The phone number of the pharmacy is on the label of the medication bottle.
- Finally, make sure you record all the necessary information using the IDF eHealthRecord: www.idfehealthrecord.org. It is a practical tool to keep track of all your medical information.

Scheduling Appointments

Making an appointment to see your physician requires more than just picking up the phone and scheduling it. You will want to plan ahead and prepare yourself so your visit will be productive for you and your physician.

- Before you call for an appointment, determine which days and times fit your schedule the best. You need to consider school, work, and other events in your schedule. Write down the days and times that fit your schedule the best.
- When you call to set up an appointment, tell the person who does the scheduling the days and times that you would prefer. Also, ask this person if any tests will be done during this visit. Depending upon the nature of your visit, the physician may run tests that require you to fast for a certain amount of time or some other requirement.
- Now is the time, before the day of the visit, to organize your medical information. The physician and hospital will create and keep a file on you that has your medical information, immunization records, and hospitalizations but keeping an up-to-date health file yourself can be very useful information for you and your physician. The IDF eHealthRecord (www.idfehealthrecord.org) is an easy and practical tool to do this. Your personal health file will allow you to access this information when you need it; like when the office is closed or you are out of state or in the case of an emergency.
- The following should be included in your personal health file:
 - Personal health information: copy of your health insurance card, state issued identification card and emergency medical information.
 - Records and test results: immunization records, copies of medical tests, blood work, medications, height/weight chart and other test results.
 - Receipts: recorded information from insurance company of bills they have paid or reimbursed you and receipts from out-of-pocket medical expenses.
 - Medical history and notes: copies of hospitalization discharge summaries and copies of discharge summaries from specialists.
 - Notes and other correspondence from your physician or letters you have written: medical justification documentation, appeals to insurance companies, or other medically related correspondence.
- Write down medical questions that you want to ask your physician. It is a good idea to write them down so you won't forget.

Appointment Day

A little planning ahead before the day of your appointment should make it more productive. You may want to consider the following:

- Transportation: How are you getting to the physician's office? You don't want to be late so figure out the form of transportation and how long it will take to get there on time. If you are running late, call the office and let them know.
- Health information: You will need your health insurance card, personal identification, and your updated personal health file.
- Clothing: Wear clothes and shoes that will make it easier to get undressed and dressed.
- Personal Calendar: It will be very helpful to have your personal calendar if you need to make another appointment so you know what days and time work best for you.