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intricacies of how the body processes chemicals we put into it. So we need a physician who can help us sort out what is going on.

Information contained in this brochure is not meant to be taken as medical advice but as a resource to assist you in communicating with your physician when you need to or wish to make medication adjustments.

ALWAYS seek the services of your physician before going off or on a medication.

### **STATEMENT OF FAITH:**

Psalm 147:3—He heals the broken-hearted and binds up their wounds.

### **MISSION**

The mission of Hope Recovery is to provide Christian-based compassion in the lives of trauma survivors by assisting them in recovery, providing support, resources, committed volunteers, and standards of excellence.

### **VISION**

Hope Recovery aspires to work with professional mental health staff to assist in the supportive facilitation of trauma survivors in achieving their recovery goals.

**Donations are welcome to keep support services free for trauma survivors.**

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Hope Recovery Inc.

## Medication Changes



{ You're Not Alone! }



## Medication Changes

Medication changes become necessary at some points in time. Either they aren't working right, or they aren't the right dosage, or we feel we don't need them any longer. So this is an opportunity to look at what can be done to safely make medication changes.

First of all, no change should be made without supervision of your physician. Some medications stay in your system for a longer period of time than others, while some must be tapered off of or tapered on to. Abruptly stopping or starting a medication without a physician's direction could result in deadly effects.

One thing you can do to help your physician work with you in deciding whether or not a medication is a good fit for you is to keep a medication log with a mood chart/symptom log. For example, if you are on an antidepressant medication, tracking when you started the antidepressant, when the dosage was increased or decreased, and how your mood was impacted on a daily basis can help your physician to see the relationship of the med to your moods. In the notes section of your mood chart, you can note any other side effects, such as lethargy, increased or decreased appetite, etc.

Pain medications are another example of a type of medication that keeping a log would be beneficial for. For example, if your pain is worse in the morning or the afternoon, what scale the pain is such as 7 out of 10 in intensity, and whether or not you've taken any pain medication and what time you last took it. As there are multiple types of medications for pain, such as anti-inflammatories as well as pain medications, it's important to be specific for the doctor's information.

Patience is something that needs to be utilized when making medication changes. Having a good support system can help with this, as sometimes they can see things that you can't see in yourself. Also, they can help to listen and encourage you in the time that you are waiting for the medication changes to take effect.

Don't be afraid to be honest with your physician about even the little things when making medication changes. While most people may or may not have a particular side effect of the medication, you may. From time to time, this even happens after having been on a medication for a long period of time. One individual was on a medication for three years when it began to cause side effects for her. After signifi-

cant testing, they decided to look at the medications, and taking away that one medication resolved the problem.

Some insurance companies have help lines to talk with nurses about your medications if your doctor is not readily



available. This is a resource that could be a stop-gap in a situation where you can't reach your physician and need medical assistance.

Another option is to contact your local pharmacist or emergency room if your physician is not readily available. Some emergency rooms will no longer give out medical advice over the phone, so this may not be an option in some areas.

If you are having adverse effects of medications, immediately seek emergency help by contacting your emergency services, such as 911. Remember, as consumers, we don't know the