



# Insights and Sound Bites

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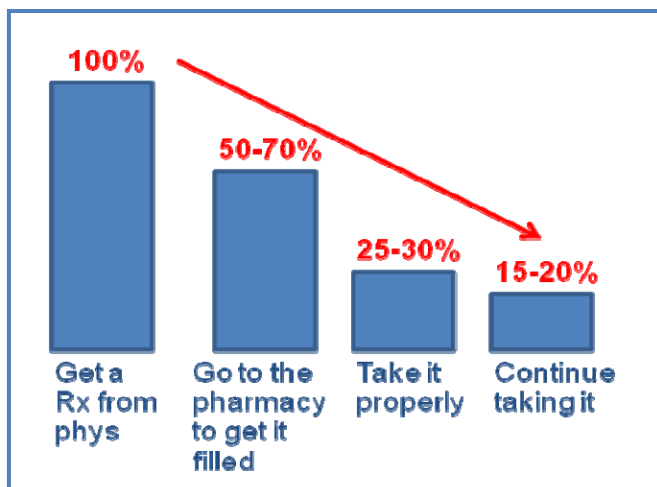
*"It is better to know some of the questions than all of the answers." – James Thurber*

## Patient Compliance

Because the importance of patient compliance continues to increase, Ladd Research Group recently attended the two-day CBI Annual Conference on "Patient Compliance and Persistence" to broaden our expertise in this area. The conference covered a broad spectrum of topics from patient compliance programs to physician education, to pharmacy interventions.

By definition patient compliance is the extent to which a person's behavior, i.e. taking medications or sticking to a regimen, corresponds to a healthcare provider's instructions. But compliance is complex and negatively influenced by a number of patient factors – misinformation, lack of motivation, denial, fear, embarrassment, forgetfulness; as well as the cost.

Statistics presented at the conference indicate that only 15-20% of patients who get an Rx from their physician are compliant with their medications, which means that only 15-20% of patients are getting the treatment they need.



Adherence to the prescribed regimen can be just as important as the prescription itself – both to the health of the patient and the health of the brand.

## Patient Compliance Programs

Many companies are developing innovative programs to enhance patient compliance. Our research has shown, regardless of the program design, there are a few key elements that impact the effectiveness of the program:

- 1) Patients do not want to be defined as having a disease – they want to be seen as an individual.
- 2) Patients are generally not motivated by "science" as much as they are by reason and education as to why it is important to take their medication.
- 3) Patients want to feel as though they are empowered to take care of themselves.

## Physician Involvement

The initial discussion between the patient and physician can be the MOST influential factor impacting compliance. While companies can leverage this by providing tools to support a more effective physician/patient dialogue, many brand managers stop short of this opportunity by simply positioning the physician as the distributor of the product's "patient starter kit". Tools to enhance dialogue must enable and encourage the physician to:

- 1) Talk about the importance of adherence/compliance with every script. Research has shown that this occurs in fewer than 30% of physician/patient dialogues.
- 2) Discuss the option of "not taking it" while they are in the office rather than allow the patients to evaluate that possibility alone later.
- 3) Manage expectations and anxieties regarding side effects and onset of action.
- 4) Monitor "adherence" the same way they monitor blood pressure – on every visit.

And of course, test all communications to ensure the content is personally relevant to the patient and the language reinforces health literacy! Ladd Research Group is particularly interested in working with you on this critical component of your strategy!

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