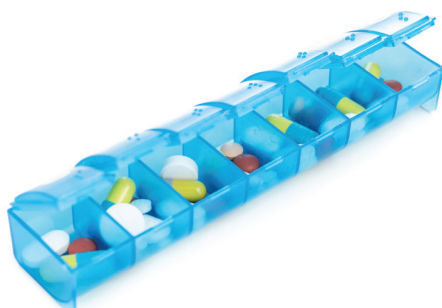


IgA nephropathy (IgAN) is a long-term kidney disease. Taking your medicines as prescribed is one of the best ways to protect your kidneys, even if you feel fine. IgAN often causes no symptoms, so feeling well does not mean you can skip a dose. This guide gives you simple tips for the everyday parts of taking medicine: remembering doses, getting refills, handling side effects, and knowing when to call your care team.

Remembering to take your medicine

- **Protein in the urine (proteinuria):** Too much protein in the urine can be a sign of kidney damage. It may make your urine look foamy. A urine test can also find protein, even if you do not notice any changes.
- **Take each medicine at the same time.** Tie daily medicines to a habit, like brushing your teeth or eating a meal. Tie a weekly medicine to a weekly habit, like garbage pickup or the start of the weekend. Follow any special instructions, like taking it before or after food.
- **Set alarms or calendar reminders.** This helps most with medicines taken once a week or once every 4 weeks, which are easy to forget. Use your phone, a calendar, or a free reminder app.
- **Use a pillbox that fits your schedule.** A weekly pillbox with a slot for each day makes it easy to see if you took a daily dose. For an injectable medicine that doesn't fit in a pillbox, put a small sticker, bead, or coin, in the box on the day it is due.
- **Keep medicines where you will see them.** But keep them away from heat, water, humidity, and children.
- **Make a simple chart.** Post a list somewhere you will see it each day. Check off each dose as you take it.
- **If you miss a dose – do not take two to catch up!** Most of the time, take the missed dose as soon as you remember. But if it is more than halfway to your next dose, skip the missed one. When in doubt, call your pharmacist.



Getting refills on time

- **Refill early.** Ask for more when you have about a week of medicine left. This helps lower your chances of running out of medicine.
- **Know how many refills are left.** The number of refills is on the label or your pharmacy app. When refills run low, your doctor must approve more. Ask 1–2 weeks early so your doctor's office, pharmacy, and insurance have time to work it out. For a refill, you can:
 - Call the pharmacy number on your bottle.
 - Use the pharmacy website or app.
 - Message or call your care team.
- **Pick up all your medicines at the same time.** Ask your pharmacy about "med sync". This lines up your refills to be picked up on the same day to make it easier to manage.
- **Plan for travel.** Bring enough medicine for your whole trip, plus a few extra days. Pack it in your carry-on bag, not checked luggage. Don't forget any weekly dose due during your trip.

Watching for side effects

Every medicine can cause side effects. Knowing what to look for helps keep you safe. Common things to watch for include:

- Feeling dizzy, faint, or very tired.
- Swelling in your legs, feet, or belly.
- Upset stomach, nausea, or loose stools.
- Signs of infection, such as fever, chills, sore throat, or cough.
- Any new symptom that worries you.

Write down each side effect: what it was, when it started, and how bad it was. Share this with your care team.

Managing side effects

- **Do not stop your medicine on your own.** Stopping can make your kidney disease worse. Call your care team first. They may change the dose or time or try another medicine.
- **Ask about timing.** Some side effects get better if you take the medicine with food or at a different time of day. Your pharmacist can help.
- **Give it time when it is safe.** Some mild side effects fade as your body gets used to the medicine. Your care team can tell you what to expect.

When to call your care team

Call your care team if:

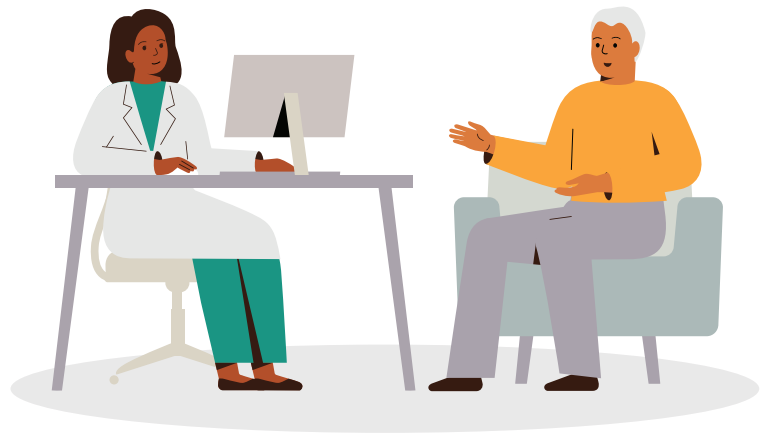
- You missed several doses or ran out of medicine.
- You have a side effect that worries you.
- You feel very dizzy, weak, or short of breath.
- You have signs of an infection, like fever or chills.
- You start or stop any medicine from another doctor.
- You are pregnant or planning to become pregnant. Some IgAN medicines are not safe in pregnancy.

Get urgent help (call 911 or go to the emergency room) if you have trouble breathing, chest pain, severe swelling of the face or throat, or you feel like you might pass out.

Questions to ask at your next visit

- How often should I take each medicine?
- What should I do if I miss a dose?
- Which side effects should I watch for?
- Are there medicines, foods, or supplements to avoid?
- Do I need any vaccines before I start this medication?
- Do any of my medicines need lab tests? If so, when should I do these?

Your care team and pharmacist are your partners. Never be afraid to ask questions. Taking your medicines correctly is one of the best ways to protect your kidneys.



For more information, contact the National Kidney Foundation

Toll-free help line: **855.NKF.CARES** or email: **nkfcares@kidney.org**