



MEDICINES - WORKING OUT YOUR TREATMENT GOALS

Different factors are important to different people when it comes to taking medicines. Different medicines can have different effects too.

WHAT IS A TREATMENT GOAL?

Whether you start, stop or continue taking a medicine when you are an older person will depend on what you want to achieve with your health and wellbeing.

These treatment goals may be to:

- relieve or prevent symptoms
- avoid disease or its complications
- treat an illness or stop it getting worse
- maintain your physical and mental wellbeing
- improve your quality of life
- extend your life.

HOW DO I DETERMINE MY TREATMENT GOALS?

Your health, wellbeing, and ability to cope with illness or disease can be different from other people — and can change for you at any time. This can influence your treatment goals and the medicines you take.

Talk to your health professional about what you want to gain from treatment, or what it is about your current health that troubles you most. That way you and your health professional can find out if a medicine or another treatment can help.

ONE SIZE DOES NOT FIT ALL

As an older person you may be very fit and healthy, or you may have a medical condition that you are able to manage yourself. You may have disease symptoms that tire or slow you up, or that reduce your ability to carry out daily activities on your own. Or perhaps you or someone in your care is very frail, completely dependent, or near the end of life.

These differences can mean that what you want from treatment as a fit and healthy older person will be different from your needs if you are very frail or sick. Preventing disease and staying active may be most important when you are fit and healthy — while improving symptoms, mobility and quality of life may be the goal if you are frail or dependent on care.

TREATMENT GOALS CAN CHANGE OVER TIME

Also keep in mind that your treatment goals can change. For example, if the symptoms of your medical condition worsen, or your values, experiences or concerns about your medicines change.



WHAT CAN I DO?

Ask your health professional to review your medicines regularly to check they are still needed and are achieving your treatment goals. Discuss any problems with, or concerns you have, about your medicines with your doctor or other health professional at any time.

Find out about other ways that you and your carers can help to prevent medicine problems.

It's OK to ask questions

If you have questions about your symptoms or the medicines managing your symptoms, speak with your health professional.

Adapted from NPS MedicineWise (2013), [Working out your treatment goals](#).

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