

# Ten Tips for Recovery Schizophrenic Illness

1. **Participate in your treatment.** You are the expert about yourself. Be actively involved in setting your individual goals and your treatment plan. Your treatment should be based on your needs and goals. Practice new skills you learn in treatment.
2. **Ask questions.** Ask your Care Coordinator/Case Manager or medication prescriber to explain your diagnosis, treatment alternatives and recommendations. Write down questions ahead of time and bring them with you. If you don't understand something, ask again. Ask a friend or family member to attend a session with you to assist you.
3. **Treat suicidal thoughts seriously.** Talk openly about any suicidal thoughts you are having with your Care Coordinator/Case Manager, prescriber, or a nurse. If needed, get immediate help by calling 911 or going to the nearest hospital emergency room.
4. **Be alert to early symptoms.** Ask your family and friends to help you with this. Symptoms of schizophrenic illness can return, particularly when under stress. Seek treatment as soon as possible. Ask your Care Coordinator/Case Manager about developing a Wellness Recovery Action Plan (WRAP) or crisis plan. Share your plans with your family and friends.
5. **Create support** through family, friends, and peers. Ask your Care Coordinator/Case Manager or the Office of Consumer and Family Affairs (303 432-5955) for information about peer support options in the community.
6. **Care about yourself.** Establish a healthy lifestyle; see your Primary Care Provider regularly (PCP). If you don't have a PCP ask your Care Coordinator/Case Manager for assistance in obtaining one. Have a routine to make sure you get adequate sleep and some physical activity. Try to do some things you enjoy with other people. Remember, alcohol and illegal drugs can worsen schizophrenic illness symptoms. If you use alcohol, use only in moderation.
7. **Take schizophrenia medications regularly,** even if you are feeling better. Call your prescriber or nurse if you have questions or if you have uncomfortable side effects. Ask about other medications with fewer side effects or that decrease side effects.
8. **Keep your appointments.** This is your time—use it effectively. Call ahead if you need to change an appointment.
9. **Be hopeful. Set personal goals.** People with schizophrenic illness can and do recover and live full and productive lives.
10. **Learn about schizophrenic illness** and how people recover from mental illness. Ask for written materials, read information on the internet or from the library. Two places to start are the National Institute of Mental Health (1.800.421.4211 or [www.nimh.nih.gov](http://www.nimh.nih.gov)), and the FBH website, [www.fbhpartners.com](http://www.fbhpartners.com)



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