



Poor visit keeping is associated with poor medication compliance

The Science behind the Tip

Factors associated with poor medication compliance have been determined for a number of chronic internal disorders that like glaucoma most often have no immediate symptoms. Frequent breaking of appointments with a physician appeared to be associated with poor medication compliance and poorer health outcomes in patients with for example epilepsy¹, hyperlipidemia² or diabetes³. As a consequence, missed appointments have been proposed as an opportunity for the physician to identify non-compliant patients³.

A similar association between poor visit keeping and poor medication compliance has been observed in glaucoma patients⁴. Thus, although many patients fail to take their glaucoma medications as prescribed⁵, one should particularly be alert to this problem in the case of visit defaulters.

In order to check compliance, it may not be very useful to ask the patient whether he/she took the medication(s) as directed. Instead, putting forth the question "Can you tell me how you took your medicine?" is more likely to result in a truthful answer.

References

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