Tips for New Players

April 14, 2015 By Grace Campbell

“Here’s a tip - work hard and be good to your mother.”

I’ve been walking the path of Hepatitis C treatment for almost a month now. Only 5 left to go.

I thought you might be interested in some real, actual, day-to-day management tips I’ve found useful. They aren’t about side effects, they are about how to manage this new side of your life for a while. They are also really, really basic. So basic in fact I pondered whether to post them or not. But I approached treatment from a position of not really having to manage any regular medication, so I had no idea of the new structure I would need in my life. You might be like me. It’s a new level of organisation for us.

- You need to be somewhere near food at set points in your day that work best for you. They might require slight adjustment, (I had to slowly change my medication times when daylight savings finished) but do that slowly and do try to keep to the same times every day. Consistency is key here.
- You need to determine what the best times are for you, the drugs, your life and your family. Somehow you need to balance all those things. Good luck with that!
- You need to have access to said food. All the tablets I’m on need to be taken with food. For someone who had a pretty free-wheeling approach to food and meal times, I found this a challenge. I try to carry a little tub of fruit, a protein bar, fruit bar or muesli bar with me all the time. It’s not ideal, but it’s better than nothing.
- You need a reminder of when to take the medication. I have an app that reminds me when it’s time. It’s saved my bacon more than once.
- You need a way of storing the medication. Because I am on Viekira Pak + Riba, I have a multitude of tablets to take. I use a Little Old Lady AM/PM pill container. Laugh all you like that sweet, sweet piece of plastic is a lifesaver. I can tell at a glance if I have taken the meds or not. And believe me, when YOUR brain is mush, you’ll appreciate it too.

- You need a back up plan in case you are called away on an emergency and can’t get to your tablets for a day. I have two day’s worth of medication in my handbag. Just in case.
- Carry a water bottle. Make it a decent, refillable one so you aren’t constantly buying water (I can just hear my grandmother: “Buying WATER! Whatever will they think of next!”). Drink the water. It won’t help you in your bag, in your car or on your desk. Try to empty the bottle before you refill it, that allows you to work out how much you are drinking.

There are plenty of other tips out there, but these are basic and important. You’ve probably got most of them covered anyway, because you’re smart like that. That’s why we get on so well.

Do you have any must-share tips that helped you? Care to share them?

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