

# Global patient study identifies key reasons driving nonadherence to self-administered cancer medications

SUMMIT, NEW JERSEY, USA, June 27, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Atlantis Health, a leading global patient agency specializing in the latest behavioral science, today announced the key findings of the Atlantis Health [Global Oncology Patient Nonadherence Study](#), which provides several new insights including reasons why people living with cancer consciously choose not to take their primary self-administered medication as prescribed.



These findings are valuable, especially to life sciences companies. Together we can provide people living with cancer targeted support for managing their disease and treatment for optimal outcomes."

*Jonny Duder, CEO, Atlantis Health*

A key finding of the study revealed three main themes across several modifiable reasons for intentional nonadherence given by people with cancer on self-administered treatment:

- **Doubting treatment:** includes reasons that reflect doubt and a level of skepticism about the need and efficacy of the medication, including how it works in the body
- **Reclaiming identity and control:** specific reasons within this factor reflect the negative impact that taking medication has on one's sense of self and one's sense of

control over one's body

- **Reducing disruption:** reasons related to this factor reflect the difficulty and disruption of fitting medication into one's daily life

The study also found that, consistent with adherence rates to self-administered oncology medications reported in the research literature, 56% of participants reported at least some level of nonadherence to anti-cancer medications.

In addition to identifying opportunities for intervention to address medication nonadherence, the study also assessed levels of awareness and engagement with digital health, patient organizations and pharma-sponsored patient support initiatives. Respondents also shared their perspectives on how they think about their cancer and what motivates them to adhere to their medication routine.

Implications of these findings

Medication nonadherence reasons are both unintentional and intentional. The main implications of this report are that effective adherence interventions need to assess and target the relevant intentional reasons that are common among people living with cancer and managing at-home medications, along with unintentional nonadherence factors such as forgetting and cost. Adherence interventions should be designed to support not just treatment initiation but also to engage patients over time to address evolving beliefs and perceptions about treatment and cancer. Patients can be supported to find acceptance and commit to value-based action so they can continue to live the life they want – and continue to take treatment as prescribed.

## Oncology Nonadherence is a Global Problem

The past decade has seen a dramatic increase in self-administered oncology treatments (Vyas et al., 2022), and this trend is set to continue, moving treatment from hospitals and outpatient clinics to patients self-managing cancer medications at home. While often perceived as a more convenient option, treatments self-administered at-home can come with increased risk of medication nonadherence.

Reported rates of adherence to self-administered oncology treatments range between 16 and 100% (Foulon et al., 2011). Suboptimal adherence is associated with poorer health outcomes and increased healthcare costs. The high rates of nonadherence, and the consequences thereof, highlight the need for effective interventions to support patients to take their cancer medications as prescribed.

“New oncology treatments are making a significant impact on these outcomes however cancer patients and their families often need support in accepting and adhering to treatments long term,” said Jonny Duder, CEO of Atlantis Health. “These intentional nonadherence findings are valuable - especially to oncology medication providers worldwide - because together we can design and deliver support solutions that help people living with cancer to manage their disease and treatment plan in order to receive the full benefit and improve long term outcomes.”

### About the study:

- Cross-sectional online study conducted in May-June 2024
- 126 participants aged 18+, residing in US, Europe, and Asia Pacific, with a cancer diagnosis, self-administering cancer medication at home.
- Half of the sample have a breast cancer diagnosis, with thyroid, blood and male urologic cancers also represented
- Study design used both open-ended questions and psychometrically validated questionnaires: Medication Adherence Rating Scale, Intentional Nonadherence Scale, Beliefs about Medicines Questionnaire, Brief Illness Perceptions Questionnaire, and Perceived Sensitivity to Medicines Scale.
- Most participants have lived with their cancer for at least 1 year, with 20% of the sample living with cancer for between 1 and 2 years.

- 97% of participants are prescribed to take their anti-cancer medication at least once a day.

### About Atlantis Health

As a global patient agency and strategic partner to pharmaceutical and life sciences companies, Atlantis Health co-designs and delivers patient engagement solutions using the latest behavioral science.

Atlantis Health helps clients achieve better outcomes with behavioral science including:

- 20% average increase in treatment adherence
- 80%+ patient retention over time
- 80%+ average satisfaction

For 25 years, we've helped pharmaceutical and life science companies dramatically improve new product launches, medication adherence and health outcomes by designing and delivering personalized patient engagement solutions with our leading behavior change strategies, techniques and technology.

### Additional Resources

- Contact our study lead researcher Dr. Kate Perry, Global Head of Health Psychology at Atlantis Health, to arrange a 30-minute online discussion and receive a free copy of the study report: [kate.perry@atlantishealth.com](mailto:kate.perry@atlantishealth.com)
- Visit Atlantis Health [News & Publications](#) for further behavioral research insights

### References:

Foulon, V., Schöffski, P., & Wolter, P. (2011). Patient adherence to oral anticancer drugs: an emerging issue in modern oncology. *Acta Clinica Belgica*, 66(2), 85-96.

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Vyas, A., Descoteaux, A., Kogut, S., Parikh, M. A., Campbell, P. J., Green, A., & Westrich, K. (2022). Predictors of adherence to oral anticancer medications: An analysis of 2010-2018 US nationwide claims. *Journal of managed care & specialty pharmacy*, 28(8), 831-844.

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