How clinicians communicate with patients can influence treatment adherence. Below are some strategies you can implement immediately to help you communicate more effectively.

<table>
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<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Example</th>
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| Begin with open-ended questions about adherence, including recent medication use | AVOID: “Are you taking your medicines?”  
TRY: “How are your medications working for you?” |
| Address “red flags” (e.g., missed appointments, prescription refills, requested labs, and lack of therapeutic response to medication change) | AVOID: “Why did you miss your appointment?”  
TRY: “I noticed you missed your clinic visit two months ago. Is there something we can do to help you get your follow-up care?” |
| Explore reasons for possible non-adherence | AVOID: “Let me prescribe a different pill that might work better.”  
TRY: “What do you think would make it easier?” |
| Elicit patient views on options and priorities to customize a care plan for each patient | AVOID: “Have you considered using a pillbox?”  
TRY: “What do you think would work for you?” or “What has worked for you in the past?” |
| Remain non-judgmental at all times | AVOID: Educational statements like “It’s really important to take your pill if you want to control your blood pressure.”  
TRY: Supportive statements like “Let’s think about this problem together; maybe we can come up with something that will work for you.” |
| Use teach-back to ensure understanding of the care plan | AVOID: Close-ended questions like “Does this make sense to you?”  
TRY: “What is your understanding of what we’ve discussed today?” |
| Use positive reinforcement to encourage healthy ideas or behaviors | AVOID: “You haven’t been eating healthy or losing weight, only walking. You are not helping lower your blood pressure like we discussed.”  
TRY: “It’s good that you’ve been walking. Let’s talk about other things you can do to control your blood pressure.” |
| Use ask-provide-ask structure to … | AVOID: Statements that give advice without first asking what the patient already knows or thinks.  
TRY: “What do you know about exercising to lower blood pressure?”  
Patient responds: “I know I should be exercising three days a week.”  
You follow with: “That’s right, 30 minutes, three days a week is ideal. You can break each of those 30-minute sessions into three, 10-minute sessions. Does that sound reasonable?” |