

Clearer Medication Label Directions For Patients

Basic Medication Directions Structure: Verb – Dose/Quantity/Formulation – Route of Administration – Frequency

Prescribers

- **Use ‘morning’, ‘noon’, ‘evening’, and ‘bedtime’ frequencies, which patients are less likely to misinterpret**

Instead of ‘Take 1 tablet by mouth two times per day’

Use ‘Take 1 tablet by mouth in the morning and in the evening’

- **Use the indication for use when appropriate** (sensitive information should not be included)
- **Indicate maximum amount per day for ‘as needed’ medications**
- **Avoid ‘take as directed’ unless the pre-packaged medication package includes directions**
- **Avoid medical jargon**

Pharmacies

- **For the quantity of tablets:**
 - **Use numerals for whole numbers**
Instead of ‘Take one tablet by mouth every morning’
Use ‘Take 1 tablet by mouth every morning’
 - **Use text for fractions**
Instead of ‘Take 1/2 tablet by mouth every morning’
Use ‘Take half a tablet by mouth every morning’
- **Use sentence case instead of all capital letters**
- **Avoid terminology that all patients might not understand** (‘once’, ‘twice’, or ‘per oral route’)
- **Standardize the format of basic directions** (there are over 30 different ways of writing ‘Take 1 tablet by mouth every day’)
- **Address limited English proficiency and visual impairments**

