

Does text messaging help with medication adherence in chronic disease?

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Medication adherence in chronic disease is poor. Can telephone text messaging help with adherence? A new article published online by *JAMA Internal Medicine* examines the question in a meta-analysis conducted by Jay Thakkar, F.R.A.C.P., and Clara K. Chow, Ph.D., of The George Institute for Global Health, the University of Sydney, Australia, and coauthors.

The meta-analysis included 16 [randomized clinical trials](#) to assess the effect of text messaging on medication adherence in chronic disease.

The results suggest text messaging was associated with increased odds of medication adherence. However, the authors encourage caution when interpreting their results, in part, because of the reliance on self-reported [medication adherence](#). The authors recommend future studies with a focus on appropriate patient populations, the longevity of the effect and the influence on clinical outcomes.

In a related commentary, R. Brian Haynes, M.D., Ph.D., of McMaster University, Hamilton, Ontario, Canada, and coauthors write: "In summary, future adherence research needs to overcome the common methodological pitfalls that are still plaguing the field. As Thakkar et al show, TM [text messaging] has potential as a widespread, low-cost technology but will need more development and rigorous testing to determine if it has real, enduring and patient-important benefits that are worth the investment."

More information: *JAMA Intern Med.* Published online February 1, 2016. [DOI: 10.1001/jamainternmed.2015.7667](https://doi.org/10.1001/jamainternmed.2015.7667)

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