Health is fine if pills are on time

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Abstract: Medication non-adherence is a pervasive problem that can impact an individual's health and wellness. MediSafe is a user-friendly and simple app that enables patients to improve their medication adherence by setting reminders, and enhance their provider relationships by sharing intake and health indicator history.

Keywords: Medication; management; adherence

Medication adherence is important for successful management of many chronic conditions, yet 30–50% of patients do not take their medications as prescribed. This is concerning because whenever individuals miss a prescribed medication, they lose an opportunity to improve their health and wellness. Many factors influence an individual's ability to adhere to their medication regimen, ranging from self-motivation to ability to remember. Individuals may also need a system to document their medication history to share with their providers for helping understand progression of diseases and/or other medical issues. A myriad of mobile applications are available in online app stores to help patients manage their medications, in this column, we explore one of the most highly rated app called MediSafe.

The simple and clean user interface of MediSafe allows you to organize your medications in four parts of the day—morning, afternoon, evening and night (*Figure 1*). Using the '+' button you can add medications along with intake times to any part (*Figure 2*). The main page (*Figure 1*) is automatically refreshed each day, showing you your scheduled medications. By swiping across the screen, you can move between previous and future days.

When it is time to take a medication, the phone will ring and the app will ask you to indicate whether you took the medication or skipped it (*Figure 3*). You can even hit snooze, if you want to be reminded later. Your response will update the main interface with a check or a cross on each

medication (*Figure 1*). Besides medication intake reminders, you can also schedule medication refill reminders to ensure that you are able to continue your regimen without a break. Another useful feature of the app is intake statistics which is based on your responses to the reminders, and can be
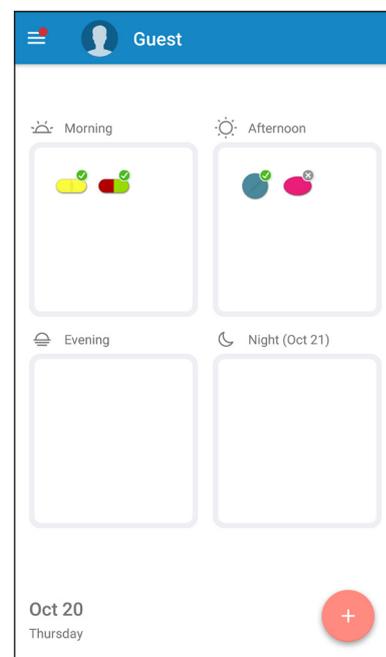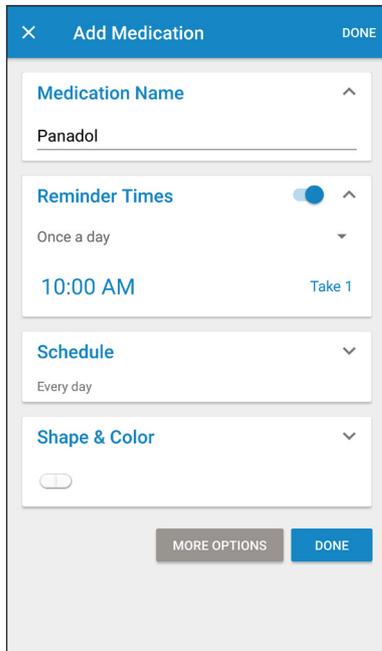

Figure 1 MediSafe medication tray.

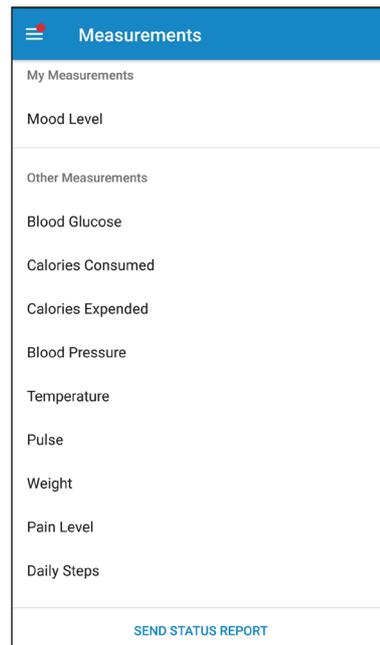**Figure 2** Entering a medication in MediSafe.

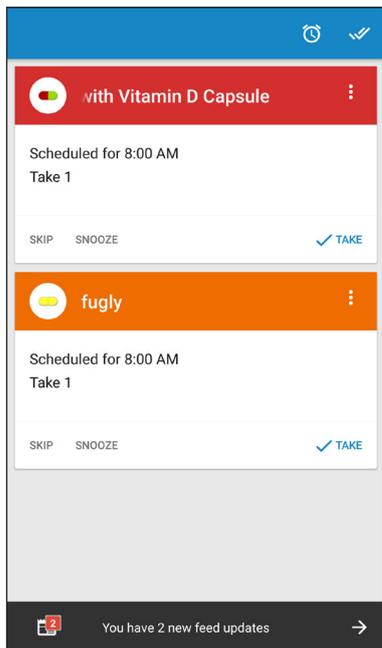**Figure 4** MediSafe health indicators.

Figure 3 MediSafe medication reminder.

generated by week, month or year. In other words, you can generate a report of which medications you skipped or took over a specified time, and then share it with your providers directly through the app.

Besides simplifying the details of medication management, MediSafe also enables you to track a number of health indicators (*Figure 4*) or record notes. Such detailed information can help providers understand the impact of prescriptions on the course of your disease(s) to ultimately make medication/dosage changes, if necessary. You can also set reminders for doctors' appointments to ensure you are on track with your care. Finally, you can add profiles for your dependents in this app and manage their medications simultaneously. In other words, this app can be very useful for caregivers who are often managing their own chronic conditions, in addition to taking care of their dependents.

Manual tracking of medications with mobile apps may appear to be tedious but we are looking towards a bright future of these apps. From passive tracking and updating of medications, we will soon move into an era of personalized

internet of things where things around you will be a reflection of your health and your commitment to staying healthy.

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Footnote

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