

Medication Safety Check List



Staggering Statistics

67% of Seniors take more than 5 medications daily (polypharmacy)

94% of seniors are prescribed medications that that increased fall risks

75% of seniors declared that they frequently make mistakes with taking medications

Know Your Medications

- Know the name and doses of your medicines.
- Know why the medicine is important and what it treats.
 - Each medication should have a corresponding diagnosis
- Read your labels to learn what you are taking, how and when to take it, etc.
- Know side effects.
 - Most common are GI upset related to absorption. Must evaluate if some side effects are worth the therapeutic effect gained
- Know how your medications interact with each other and any nonprescription drugs you take, including pain killers, cold remedies, supplements, foods and alcohol.
 - www.drugs.com
- Know what to do if you miss a dose.
 - Examples Antibiotics VS. Blood Pressure medications
- Know if you are allergic to any medicines.

Take Your Medicine!

- Make sure you take your medicine in the correct dose. Use the measuring cup or syringe that comes with liquid medicines.
- Take capsules or tablets whole, unless otherwise instructed.
 - Try putting the pill in applesauce or pudding if difficult to swallow
 - Ask about alternate forms

- Take your medicines at the right time(s).
 - Use a pill box (Be sure that it accommodates your frequency)
 - Get medication in the form of a pillow pack for daily administration
 - Use an automated dispenser (Hero, Livefine, Ceilblue all under \$100)
- Renew your medications in advance so you don't run out.

Store Your Medications Properly & Safely

- Keep your medications out of direct sunlight and heat.
- Keep your medicine away from pets and children.
- Don't store your medications with other family member medicines or household cleaners.
- Keep medicines in their original bottles.
- Read stickers on labels which include "refrigeration" and expiration dates

When Hospitalized

- Identify yourself to the nurse and ask questions before you take given medications.
- Make sure your health care providers know all the medications you are taking.
- Make sure your care providers know any medication allergies you may have.
- Know which medicine changes were made and follow up with your primary doctor once you leave the hospital.

Other Tips to Consider

- Tell your doctor or pharmacist if you have a problem taking the drug for any reason, including cost.
- Ask if there is a generic brand available.
- Use only one pharmacy
- Make sure you got the right medicine from the pharmacy.
 - Zyrtec/Zyprexa Penicillin/Penicillamine Ephedrine/Epinephrine
- Keep a list of all medications you take.
- Know your medicine allergies.
- Report unusual side effects.
- Ask if lower doses might be helpful depending on your age or any kidney or liver problems.
- Discuss your medication regime annually with your physician to eliminate medications that may no longer be therapeutic