

MEDICATION SAFETY TIPS FOR SENIORS



TO HELP PREVENT SERIOUS COMPLICATIONS, EVEN DEATH, HERE ARE A FEW TIPS ON TAKING MEDICATIONS SAFELY:

REVIEW

YOUR MEDICATION HISTORY

Gather all the prescription, over-the-counter (OTC), vitamin, and herbal supplements that you take, and bring them to every doctor appointment or keep an updated list in your wallet to use as a discussion tool with your doctor or pharmacist.

TALK

TO YOUR DOCTOR OR PHARMACIST FIRST

Add OTC products to your medication schedule only after talking to your doctor or pharmacist. Many OTC medications including cold remedies, pain relievers, sleep aids, antacids, and even mineral supplements can cause adverse reactions or interact negatively with prescription medications.

DON'T WAIT!

NOTIFY YOUR DOCTOR PROMPTLY

of any adverse symptoms (stomach upset, diarrhea, difficulty urinating, constipation, forgetfulness, skin irritation, dizziness, etc.) that you experience, especially after starting any new medications.

FOLLOW

ALL DIRECTIONS

Make sure you know each medication's purpose; amount to take; best time to take it; whether to take it with or without food; and any storage requirements. Also know the potential side effects and what to do if they occur.

USE

MEMORY TIPS

Reminder systems including a daily pillbox, calendar or chart will help ensure that you take medications as directed.



TAKE

MEDICATION ONLY AS NEEDED

Some medications for short-term use treat certain symptoms that are expected to stop. If the symptoms persist, notify your doctor promptly.

CAUTION

READ AND FOLLOW

all precautions or medication labels. They often are shown as illustrations or stickers.

TELL

ALL DOCTORS WHAT THE OTHERS HAVE PRESCRIBED

Make sure your primary doctor knows of any medications prescribed by other doctors or specialists, and vice versa.

FEWER

PHARMACIES, FEWER PROBLEMS

Try to fill as many prescriptions as possible at the same pharmacy or chain to better monitor any potential interactions and contraindications.

KEEP

INTRODUCING YOURSELF

Be careful upon admittance and discharge from a hospital, nursing home or emergency room. Make sure all the various health professionals know you, your medical history and your medication schedule. Request a full explanation, preferably in writing, of any change they make to your medications.

BEWARE

OF "DROWSY" MEDICATIONS

Some medications cause drowsiness and can increase the chance of falling down. If you take such medications, ask your doctor if there are safer alternatives.

