

Keep Track of Your Medicines

Keep track of multiple prescriptions with a weekly pill organizer (dosette box) that you fill yourself or ask your pharmacist to organize your meds in a daily calendar (blister pack).



Create a medication list to:

- Help you know more about your medicines
- Remind you how and when to take your medicines
- Ensure everyone involved in your health care knows which medicines you use
- Help your doctor and pharmacist check and review your medications
- Provide vital information about your medicines in an emergency

Medication lists should include:

- The name of all medicines that you use, including prescription, over the counter and natural medicines
- What each medicine is used for
- Dosage and how often you take it
- Any special instructions (with food)
- List any negative reaction you have experienced
- Include names and phone numbers for doctors (prescribers) and your pharmacy
- If you no longer take a medicine, draw a line through it and put the date that you stopped

Medication list tips:

- Always have access to your medication list. Keep a paper copy in your wallet or an updated photo of the list on your phone. Give a copy to your emergency contact.
- Take this list to all doctor visits, when you go for tests and to all hospital visits.
- If you prefer an electronic record, there are multiple medication apps available to download for smartphones, tablets or online use. Apps will also send reminders to take your medications.

Generic and brand names

- Every medication has a generic name (the drug itself) and a brand name (assigned by its manufacturer)
- “Aspirin®” is a brand of acetylsalicylic acid
- “Tylenol®” is a brand of acetaminophen
- “Advil®” is a brand of ibuprofen

Questions to Consider When Obtaining Medication(s)

Why was this medication recommended?

Is it a necessity or for convenience?

Is it a substitute for proper action or control?

Who is recommending this medication (doctor, pharmacist, nurse, family member or friend)?

Is the person recommending the medication aware of any other medications I am presently taking?

Has this medication been properly tested for reactions or interactions?

Questions For Your Pharmacist

What is the name of the medicine I am taking?

What does it do?

How long do I have to take it?

Are there any side effects?

What should I do if I experience any side effects?

Should I avoid eating or drinking certain foods or beverages while taking this medication?

Can I continue to take prescription and/or non-prescription medication(s) while taking this medication?

Should I be worried about harmful interactions with other medications?

Can I have written information about each of my medications?

Could you provide me with my medication schedule?

If you are interested in booking a workshop on the safe use of medication contact
1-800-268-9040 ext.3506

Medication Awareness Program: A Prescription for Healthy Use



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Adverse Drug Interaction

Over the counter drugs like Aspirin®, cough syrups, laxatives, antihistamines and also alcohol can interfere with your prescription medicines. The potential for ill consequences is significant. Consult your doctor.

Natural or herbal products (e.g. ginkgo, glucosamine, garlic, Echinacea, St. John's Wort) can interfere with prescription medications. Just because something is "natural" does not mean it is safe. Some herbal products can cause serious drug interactions when combined with prescription or over-the-counter medications. Check with your pharmacist.

Grapefruit can affect how our body handles many different medications. The effects of grapefruit vary from person to person and from one grapefruit juice to another but grapefruit will only interact with certain medications.

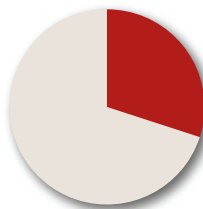
Here are some (**not all**) of the drugs that can interact with grapefruit:

- Alprazolam (Xanax®), diazepam (Valium®), triazolam (Halcion®). Used for anxiety
- Amlodipine (Norvasc®), felodipine, nifedipine (Adalat®). Used for high blood pressure
- Atorvastatin (Lipitor®), lovastatin, simvastatin (Zocor®). Used for high cholesterol
- Amiodarone (Cordarone®). Used for irregular heart beat

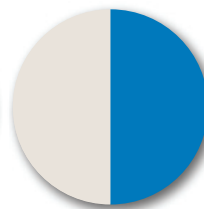


Medication awareness

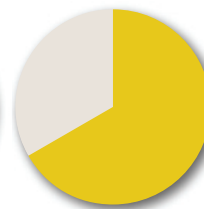
- Medication includes prescription drugs, over-the-counter (non-prescription) products, vitamins and herbal products.
- Medication misuse is common and serious
- Half of all people do not take their prescription drugs as intended
- For those over 65 years, approximately half of hospital admissions are due to medication related problems
- Approximately 4,000 deaths are blamed on medication misuse each year in Canada



30%
of prescription
drugs are
abused



50%
of all people
do not
take their
prescription
drugs properly



60%
of people
cannot name
their drugs

Definitions of medication misuse

- Over use
- Under use
- Erratic use
- Ignorance of interactions
- Non-adherence
- Doctor shopping
- Inappropriate prescribing

Medication Facts:

- Older adults are more at risk from drug side effects, experiencing up to five times as many adverse reactions as younger age groups.
- Age related changes to the liver and kidneys can slow the metabolism of drugs.
- Nutritional factors can compound the risks associated with drug therapy. Many drugs can cause side effects such as loss of appetite, nausea, vomiting, gastric upset, or vitamin depletion.
- Different medicines need to be stored differently; some need to be stored in a cool place or kept away from sunlight.
- Do not stop taking medications just because you feel better. Only stop prescribed medication on doctor's orders as some drugs can cause side effects if ended "cold turkey".
- Do not use a friend or family member's leftover supply of medicine. The medicine may look similar but the dosage may be different.
- Tranquilizers such as lorazepam (Ativan®), diazepam (Valium®), oxazepam (Serax®), and temazepam (Restoril®) are frequently prescribed to older people, with women twice as likely to have tranquilizers prescribed as men.