

Medication Use

Medicines play an important role in health care and can save, improve and extend lives. But they can also cause serious problems if they are not used properly.

Here are some useful tips:

- Use the same pharmacy for all your prescriptions.
- Make sure you know exactly how to take your medicine. Find out if it should be taken on an empty stomach or with food.
- Know what to do if you miss a dose of your medication. If you have questions, ask your doctor or pharmacist.
- Know how to safely store your medication.
- Take your medication at the same time each day.
- Ask your pharmacist about medication reminder devices such as calendars, mini-alarms or blister packages (sealed plastic bubbles).
- For more complicated routines, pill boxes with various compartments (for meals, days or weeks) can help. Pill boxes are also useful for people who have trouble opening pill bottles.
- Once a year, put all of your medications and over-the-counter products in a bag and take them to your doctor or pharmacist for them to review. The bag should include any over-the-counter or prescription drugs, herbs, vitamins, dietary supplements, and topical treatments such as ointments and creams.
- You can ask for pre-filled pill boxes or request bottles without child-proof caps. Some medication aids are available with Braille or raised characters.
- Take along a friend or relative to your doctor's appointments if you think you might need help to understand what the doctor tells you. Write down the information your doctor gives you about your medicines or your health condition.

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- Keep track of side effects or possible drug interactions and let your doctor or pharmacist know right away about any unexpected symptoms or changes in the way you feel.

For more information:

Knowledge is the best medicine (Brochure)

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