



Managing Medications

Keeping track of more than one medication can be difficult. When do you take them? Will they interact with each other? Here are some tips that will make managing medications easier.



Make a list of all medicines.

- ✓ Make a list or chart of every medication taken. List all prescription (Rx) and over-the-counter (OTC) medicines, vitamins, herbal supplements and natural or homeopathic remedies.
- ✓ Your list should include:
 - medication name
 - how much you take (dose)
 - how often you take it (frequency)
 - any special instructions
 - the name of the prescribing provider
- ✓ You can also include a description (for example: small pink pill with letter “H”). Or add a photo of the medication to the list.
- ✓ Look online for a medication-tracking sheet template.

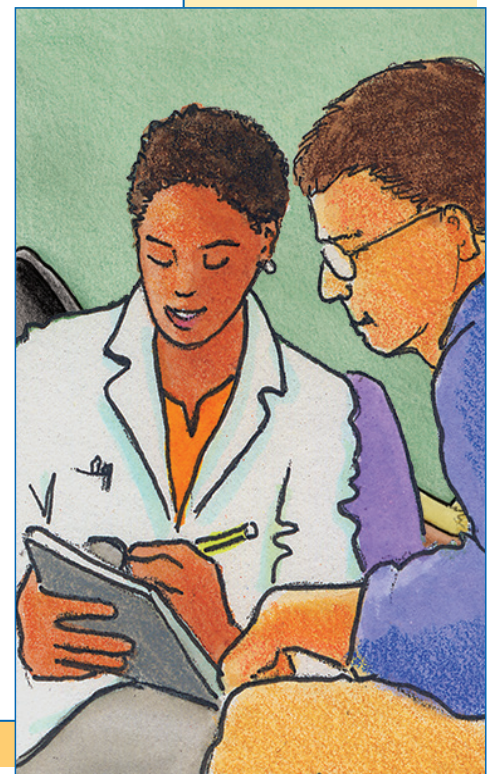
- ✓ Keep a current list on your smartphone or tablet, or take a printed list to your appointments.
- ✓ Keep a copy of the list where family members or caregivers can find it in case of an emergency.

Avoid medication errors and misuse.

- ✓ If you are not sure what a specific medicine is for, ask the doctor or pharmacist.
 - Follow instructions exactly.
 - Keep the information you get with the medicine for reference.
 - Do not stop medicines unless the doctor says to do so.
 - Ask what you should do if you miss a dose or take too much.
 - Do not share medications with others.
 - Ask about possible side effects. If you have new symptoms after starting a new medication, talk to the doctor right away.

Take your list of medications to every appointment.

- ✓ Some medications can have unpleasant or dangerous interactions with other medications, alcohol or certain foods. For this reason, it is important for all your health care providers to know all of the medications you are taking.



Use a calendar or a tracking app.

- ✓ A paper or digital calendar can help you track what to take and at what time.
- ✓ There are several apps available with reminder alerts and other helpful features. Look online for reviews, or ask your pharmacist if there is an app that they recommend.
- ✓ Try a pill organizer for medications that can be stored in them.

Store medicines as directed.

- ✓ Some medicines need to be refrigerated. Others should not be exposed to air, heat or light. Read the labels or ask your pharmacist.
- ✓ Make sure all medicines are out of reach of children and pets.
- ✓ Check expiration dates. Order refills with plenty of time so that you don't run out.



Be careful if you are buying Rx drugs online.

- ✓ Medications sold online may be less expensive and convenient, but play it safe with online pharmacies.
- ✓ There are many online pharmacies that are not legitimate. The medications they sell may not have the right amounts of the active ingredients you need, or they may have harmful ingredients.
- ✓ If shopping online, look for those that require a valid prescription, hold a state license in the U.S. and have a licensed pharmacist available to answer questions.



Ask one doctor to oversee all medicines.

- ✓ Ask one doctor (such as a family doctor) to periodically review all medications.
- ✓ Ask if any medicines are no longer needed.



Many people need to take more than one type of medication for their health. Look inside for tips on how to organize and track your medications. If you have questions or concerns about medications you are taking, talk with your doctor, health care provider or pharmacist.

For more information, visit
www.nia.nih.gov/health



TARCOG

7037 Old Madison Pike, Suite 450
Huntsville, AL 35806
(256) 830-0818
www.tarcog.us