

Tips for Taking Different Types of Medicines

- **Controlled Release**

Designed to release the medicine in a constant amount over a long period of time. Never bite, crush, or open controlled release medicines.

- **Enteric Coated**

Designed not to dissolve in the stomach in order to protect the stomach or to delay the release of the medicine. Never break or crush these tablets.

- **Fluids and Medicines**

Take all medicines with plenty of fluids. Water is usually best. Ask about avoiding special fluids (*this may be important with certain medicines*).

- **Foods and Medicines**

Food may help or hinder the absorption of your medicine. Ask if there are any special precautions.

- **Swallowing Medicines**

Sit or stand, never lie down when taking a medicine (*this might cause damage to your throat*).

The ElderCare Patient Education Series includes:

Aging and Your Response to Medicines

Alcohol: Friend or Foe?

Did You Remember to Ask? The Consumer's Quick Reference to Using Medicines

Eye Medicines: May Be More Than Meets the Eye

The Caregiver's Guide to Using Medicines

Medicines and Travel: "All Aboard" With the Older Adult's Medicine Travel Guidelines

Personal Medicine Record

Home Safety Issues: Poison Prevention for Older Adults—Accidents They Don't Have to Happen!

Vitamins Are Not Enough: A Nutritional and Vitamin Guide for Older Adults

OTCs (Over-the-Counter Medicines): Choosing the Right Nonprescription Medicine

Questions You May Have About Generic Medicines

How to Select Your Pharmacy and Pharmacist



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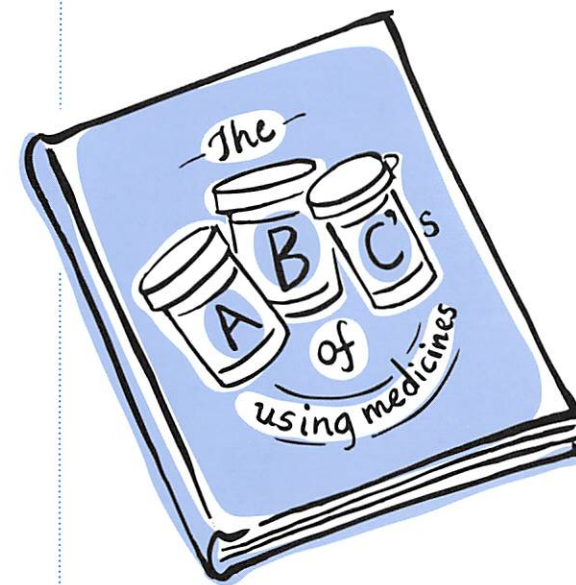
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Did You Remember to Ask?

The Consumer's Quick
Reference
to Using Medicines



THE PETER LAMY CENTER
for Drug Therapy and Aging

Ask Your Doctor . . .

When getting a new prescription or a refill for an old prescription

- What is this medicine used for?
- How should it work in my body?
- Can you write on the prescription the reason I need this medicine?
- How can I expect to feel once I start taking this medicine?
- How long will it take to work?
- How will I know that the medicine is working?
- Will you need to see me to check up on how I am doing? If so, when, and how often?
- What possible side effects can I expect from this medicine? Are they serious? What can I do to prevent them?
- Are there any special instructions for taking this medicine?
- How long will I have to take it?
- Can this medicine interact with other medicines (*prescription and nonprescription*) that I am taking now?

Information Your Doctor Needs to Know

Make a list that includes

- Your complaint (if any)
- How long it has been a problem
- If you have experienced this problem before

- How the problem started
- What you did to relieve it
- What worked, what didn't
- All medicines you use, including nonprescription medicines
- All vitamins, health food products, and herbal preparations you are taking
- Any allergies to medicines and foods
- Special diets (such as low-salt, low-cholesterol, etc)
- All other doctors (and their phone numbers) who treat you for other problems

Don't forget to bring all information about your insurance to each visit. Insurance plans change all the time! Be sure your doctor is up to date on this information.

Ask Your Pharmacist . . .

When getting your prescription filled

- What is the name of my medicine (*brand name and generic name*)?
- When should I take this medicine (*with meals, on an empty stomach, with special liquids*)?
- When is it best to take this medicine?
- Do I need any special instructions before using this medicine?
- What special precautions should I take when using this medicine (*avoid sunlight, wear sunscreen, avoid driving*)?
- What are the most common side effects? Are any of them serious? Is there anything

I can do to avoid them?

- Can I take this medicine with my other medicines, including nonprescription products?
- Can this medicine be refilled? If so, how often?

Information Your Pharmacist Needs to Know

Make a list that accounts for

- All your medicines (*prescription and nonprescription*)
- Allergies to medicines or foods
- Difficulty reading labels (*Ask for directions in large print.*)
- Difficulty opening bottles (*Ask for an easy open top for your medicine.*)
- Difficulty handling medicines (*eye drops, insulin injections*)
- Difficulty swallowing tablets or capsules (*ask before breaking, crushing, opening*)
There may be a liquid medicine available.
- Difficulty breaking tablets (*If your dose is one-half a tablet, ask the pharmacist to break the tablets for you.*)
- Difficulty remembering to take medicines (*Ask for pill boxes or other aids to remind you.*)
- A new phone number and address if you have moved.

Always bring your prescription drug insurance card with you when going to the pharmacy. Insurance plans change all the time!