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).

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**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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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 Pharmacist 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

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!