

MANAGING YOUR MEDICINES

People who take medicines regularly or have a chronic illness shouldn't forget to see a doctor to review their medicines before the prescription runs out.

WHAT TO DO

- 1) Ask your doctor to review your medicines or ask your pharmacist for advice.
- 2) Talk to your doctor before your prescription runs out and tell him/her of any problems you have experienced with taking your medicines.
- 3) **Make sure you take all of your medicines with you to the doctor**, including those you no longer use, to find out if you still need to take them all and ensure you are taking them correctly. Don't forget this includes items that you buy over the counter such as tablets, capsules, liquids, eye and ear drops, nasal sprays, creams, ointments, granules, inhalers, pessaries, suppositories and patches
- 4) Include also any complementary medicines you take such as vitamins, protein supplements and preparations containing (for example) St John's Wort, Echinacea, Gingko Biloba, Glucosamine, Celery and Melatonin.
- 5) Take your **Medicine Record Card** to be filled out or updated by your doctor. For your safety it should be kept up to date by your doctor or pharmacist.
- 6) Tell the doctor about any other doctors and specialists you are seeing and any medicines they have prescribed.
- 7) Take all of your unwanted and out-of-date medicines to the pharmacist, who will dispose of them correctly.



For a list of questions to ask your doctor or pharmacist, see the back of this page.



Health Promotion Service for Older People

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Funded by: South Eastern Sydney Illawarra Area Health Service
Auspsice: Combined Pensioners & Superannuants Association of NSW Inc (CPSA)
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SOUTH EASTERN SYDNEY
ILLAWARRA
NSW HEALTH

QUESTIONS ABOUT MEDICINES

SOME QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR DOCTOR OR PHARMACIST

- What is the medicine for?
- How and when do I take it?
- What results can I expect from taking it?
- What do I do if I miss a dose?
- How do I store the medicine?
- What things do I need to avoid while taking the medicine: alcohol, driving, certain foods, sunlight?
- How long do I need to take it for?
- When should the medicine be reviewed or stopped?
- Will this medicine interact with other medicines that I am taking?
- Is this the cheapest brand available?
- (If you drink alcohol or smoke) Will the medicine interact with alcohol or cigarettes?
- Can I get my medicines in a blister pack if I have difficulty opening a bottle?
- I have a problem with my eyesight and memory, what help is available?
- Are there alternatives to taking any of these medicines?
- In the case of a newly prescribed medicine, ask your doctor if you still need to take the old ones.

Remember: it is your body and you have the right to know what you are taking and why!



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