

HealthBreak

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Medication Safety Tips

Medications are intended to provide relief and healing, but sometimes medication-related mistakes occur that put people at unnecessary risk. Follow these common sense safety tips to keep you and your loved ones safer.

In your home

- Keep medications out of the sight and reach of children.
- Read the labels and package inserts of all your medications and supplements.
- Keep medications in their original containers.
- Clean and organize your medicine cabinet at least once or twice a year.
- Dispose of any outdated medicines.
- Ask yourself if you need helpful devices such as a magnifying glass to read labels more easily, pill organizers, or medical alert jewelry.

In the pharmacy

- As much as possible, order all your prescription drugs from the same pharmacy. A single computerized pharmacy system is more likely to catch drug interactions and other medication issues than if you are using multiple pharmacies.

- Set up a consultation with your pharmacist to review your medication regimen, including non-prescription meds, supplements, etc. He or she can help you manage your medications in order to minimize risks.

In your doctor's office

- Ask your doctor about your medication. Know why it is being prescribed and what to expect.
- Make sure your doctor knows about any medication allergies you have.
- Always bring a list of all the medications you're taking, including over-the-counter (OTC) medications and any herbal, vitamin, and dietary supplements.
- Take notes, or bring a family member or loved one to the appointment, to help you keep things straight.
- If you don't understand something, speak up.

Learn more from your healthcare provider, your pharmacist, and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (www.fda.gov).