

Senior *Health & Wellness* Guide

Using Medications Wisely

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Your Personal Health Record™

This booklet is designed to help you manage your health and medications. It includes special tips on medication use. It is divided into two color-coded sections for easy use.

My Health Record, pages 1-8, provides space to list your medications, doctor visits, and results from health tests/screenings.

Keeping Healthy, pages 9-17, includes important information on wise use of medications.

Name _____

Home Phone _____

Cell Phone _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

E-mail _____

In Case of Emergency, Contact:

Name _____

Home Phone _____

Cell Phone _____

Relationship to You _____

My Health Record

Pages in this section are highlighted with blue bars. You can record important health information here.

My Medication List 2-3

Health Topics to Review with My Doctor 4-5

My Healthcare Team 6

Recent Health Tests and Screenings 7

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My Medication List

List Your Prescription Medicines

Use a pencil so it's easier to update your list.

Medication Name	What It's For	How Much I Take	When I Take It

List Your Non-Prescription Medications and Vitamins/Herbal Supplements

Include: pain relievers, allergy medicines, antacids, sleeping pills, etc.

(Chart adapted from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration and National Institute on Aging.)

Health Topics to Review with My Doctor

Talk to your doctor about these health topics at every visit. Take notes to review at home.

Medications

Complete the medication list on pages 2 and 3. Bring this booklet to your visit. Tell your doctor if any medications are making you dizzy or giving you other problems.

Dates Discussed _____

Notes _____

Fall Prevention

Tell your doctor if you've fallen, had dizzy spells, or lost your balance. Your doctor can help adjust your medicine, suggest exercises, or give you ideas on making your home safer.

Dates Discussed _____

Notes _____

Screenings, Tests, Vaccines

Let your doctor know about any health screenings, tests, and vaccines you've had. Find out which ones you may need.

Dates Discussed _____

Notes _____

Physical Health

Diet, an active lifestyle, and proper weight are keys to good health. Find out how you can improve your diet, stay at a healthy weight, and stay active during the year.

Dates Discussed _____

Notes _____

Mental Health

Feeling sad, lonely, or tired for long periods can be signs of depression. Your doctor may have some ideas on how to help you feel better.

Dates Discussed _____

Notes _____

My Healthcare Team

List the names and phone numbers of your doctors, and other healthcare professionals.

Doctor _____

Phone _____

Specialty _____

Doctor _____

Phone _____

Specialty _____

Doctor _____

Phone _____

Specialty _____

Pharmacy/Pharmacist _____

Phone _____

Other Provider _____

Phone _____

Specialty _____

Recent Health Tests and Screenings

List recent tests and screenings here. See pages 14-15 for a list of tests and screenings covered by Medicare.

Test/Screening _____

Date _____

Reason _____

Result _____

Test/Screening _____

Date _____

Reason _____

Result _____

Test/Screening _____

Date _____

Reason _____

Result _____

Test/Screening _____

Date _____

Reason _____

Result _____

Medication Side Effects Quiz

Take this true or false quiz to see how much you know about side effects and medications. *The answers are listed below.*

1. Drugs don't interact with foods or beverages. True False
2. Upset stomach is a common side effect of many medications. True False
3. It's safe to drink grapefruit juice with any medication. True False
4. I should tell my doctor about all of my prescription and non-prescription medications. True False

Answers

1. *False: They can interact with common beverages, including alcohol, and certain foods.*
2. *True: Stomach aches, diarrhea, and constipation can result from many medications.*
3. *False: Grapefruit juice can affect the level of some medications in your bloodstream.*
4. *True: Also include any herbal products and vitamins/supplements.*

(Adapted from the NIH SeniorHealth Side Effects Quiz online.)

Keeping Healthy

Pages in this section are highlighted with green bars. You will find useful information here about your medications and your health.

Questions to Ask About Your Medications	10-11
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Questions to Ask About Your Medications

- What is the name of the medication?
- What is it for?
- How often do I take it — what times during the day?
- What amount (dosage) do I take?
- Do I take it with food or on an empty stomach?
- How long will I be on the medication?
- What should I do if I miss a dose?
- Are there any special instructions to follow?
- When should I stop taking it?
- Is it a brand name or generic?
- Do I need to take any tests while I'm on it?
- What foods or drinks (including alcohol) should I avoid while on it?
- What other medicines, dietary supplements, or activities should I stop while on it?
- What should I do about refills?
- What are the most common side effects?
- What should I do if I have side effects while taking this medication?
- When will the medication start working?
- How will I know if it's working?
- Will this new prescription work safely with my other prescription and non-prescription medicines?
- Will this new prescription work safely with my herbal products, vitamins, and dietary supplements?
- How and where should I store this medicine?

(Adapted from U.S. Food and Drug Administration and National Council on Patient Information and Education.)

Tips for Safe Use of Medications

As the patient, you play a major role in making sure all your medications are taken safely. You can maximize the benefits and minimize the risks by following these 4 steps:

1. Getting information

Get all the information you need to understand the benefits and risks of taking medications.

2. Sharing information

Tell your doctor about any allergies or sensitivities you may have.

3. Getting answers

Know what to do if you have questions or think your medication is not working correctly.

4. Following directions

Read the label and any additional written information included with your prescription. Follow all directions.

(Tips courtesy of the National Council on Patient Information and Education.)

Managing Multiple Medications

Did you know that 4 out of 10 older adults take 5 or more prescription drugs? *Taking them the right way at the right time may feel confusing. To avoid harmful medication reactions, follow these steps:*

- **Read labels.** They warn you of side effects and drug interactions.
- **Use the chart in this booklet on pages 2 and 3 to list all your medications.** Update the chart as needed. Include prescription and non-prescription medicines. Also, add your vitamins, supplements, and herbal products.
- **Ask your doctor or pharmacist if you still need all the medicines on your list.**
- **Fill all your prescriptions at one pharmacy.**
- **Get organized.** Use a pill container with AM and PM sections. Or program a beeper, telephone alarm, or your computer to remind you when your next dose is due.

(Source: National Council on Patient Information and Education.)

Preventive Services Covered by Medicare

Talk to your doctor about which tests or screenings you need, and how often. Find out which may require a referral from your doctor.

Note: You may need to pay a portion of the costs for some of these.

- Abdominal aortic aneurysm screening
- Alcohol misuse screening and counseling
- Bone mass measurement
- Breast cancer screening (mammogram)
- Cardiovascular disease (behavioral therapy)
- Cardiovascular disease screenings
- Cervical and vaginal cancer screening
- Colorectal cancer screenings:
 - Fecal occult blood test
 - Flexible sigmoidoscopy
 - Colonoscopy
 - Barium enema
 - Multi-target stool DNA test
- Depression screening
- Diabetes screenings
- Diabetes self-management training

- Flu shots
- Glaucoma tests
- Hepatitis B shots
- Hepatitis C screening test
- HIV screening
- Lung cancer screening
- Medical nutrition therapy services
- Obesity screening and counseling
- Pneumococcal shot
- Prostate cancer screenings
- Sexually transmitted infections screening and counseling
- Tobacco use cessation counseling
- “Welcome to Medicare” preventive visit (one-time)
- Yearly “Wellness” visit

For more about these preventive services, **1-800-633-4227 (TTY: 1-877-486-2048)**, or visit **www.medicare.gov**.

(Source: Medicare)

Useful Information on Medications

These websites and phone numbers provide useful information on using medications wisely. *Visit your library if you don't have Internet access at home.*

National Council on Patient Information and Education (NCPPIE)

www.talkaboutrx.org

www.TalkBeforeYouTake.org

www.BeMedWise.org

National Institute on Aging Information Center

1-800-222-2225 (TTY: 1-800-222-4225)

www.nia.nih.gov/health

www.nihseniorhealth.gov

www.nia.nih.gov/espanol

National Library of Medicine

www.MedlinePlus.gov

U.S. Food and Drug Administration

1-800-463-6332 (TTY: 711)

www.fda.gov

Myths About Medications and Older Adults

Read through the statements below to see the truth behind these common myths.

If I start feeling better, I should stop taking my medication.

Myth. Unless your doctor says so, don't stop taking your medication.

The bathroom is the best place to store medicines.

Myth. Heat and humidity in bathrooms can damage medicines. Find a cool, dry area to safely keep your medications. Keep them out of the reach of children. Make sure you lock the safety cap on all medications.

It's okay to fill my prescriptions at different pharmacies.

Myth. Use only one pharmacy. The pharmacist can keep track of all your prescriptions and tell you if any can cause problems.

(Adapted from NIH SeniorHealth Taking Medicines Safely quiz online and NCPPIE.)

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Review Copy