

MEDfacts

An Educational Health Series From National Jewish Health®



What You Need to Know About Medicine Safety

Your healthcare is a team effort, and you are an important member of the team. **Know your medicines and ask questions!**

Why do the health care providers need to know all the medication you take?

- Your health care provider needs to know about your medicine to make sure new prescriptions don't cause problems with other medicines. (We call this 'medication reconciliation')

What you can do:

- Make and carry a list of all the medicine you take. Include **all** prescription medicine as well as any over-the-counter medicine, vitamins, and herbal supplements.
- Tell your health care provider about any allergies, or bad reactions you had to medicine in the past.

Why do your health care providers check you medicine list at every single visit?

- Medicine changes occur often. We need to check your medicine and doses at each visit to make sure there aren't problems.

What can you do?

- Update and show your medicine list to your health care providers at each visit.

Why do you get a printed medicine list at every visit?

The printed list will help you identify what medicine you need to take. This will include the medicine name, dose, and how often to take the medicine.

What can you do?

- Speak up if the list of medicine doesn't seem right – for example, if a medicine is missing or the dose seems different.
- Learn what medicine you are taking. Ask what to do if you miss a dose. Ask about side effects, and what you should do if you have them. Ask if there are medicine interactions with foods and other medicines you are taking.
- If you develop itching or swelling or if you have trouble breathing after taking a new medicine, get medical help right away.

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