

Tips for Avoiding Medication Mistakes

Many people take prescription medications to manage their health. Sometimes several different medications. Whether you take one or many prescriptions, for your health and safety you need to make sure you take the correct medication, in the correct dose, at the correct time.

To make sure mistakes don't happen when taking your medications, follow this basic checklist.

Do: Use one pharmacy. The pharmacist knows everything you are taking and can let your doctor know about potential medication interactions.

Do: Read the instructions that come with your prescription. You need to understand what the medication does and why your doctor has prescribed it, common side effects and when and how best to take it.

Do: Check your pills every time you pick them up from the pharmacy. Make sure the name and dose of the medication is correct. If the pills are a different size or color, ask your pharmacist if this medication is correct.

Do: Store your medications in a separate place from where your loved ones put their prescriptions, so you don't take someone else's medication by accident.

Do Not: Store different medications in the same bottle. You can end up taking the wrong medication.

Do Not: Take any new medications, herbs, vitamins, or over the counter medications without talking to your doctor first.

Do Not: Share medications with friends or family members. Taking medications not prescribed to you can be dangerous.

Medication mix ups can happen. Sometimes with harmful results. If you develop an allergic reaction, notify your doctor and pharmacist. Follow this simple checklist to help you remember to take your medications exactly as prescribed.