

Understanding A New Prescription

At some point in your life, you will take medications. Whether it is for a short time like while recovering from surgery, or for a long time, like managing cholesterol or diabetes, it is important to fill and follow your prescription correctly.

Any medication and how it interacts with your body is complex. When being prescribed a new medication, it is important to give your healthcare provider all the information she needs to ensure you are getting the correct type of medication and dose.

Tell her about all other prescription and over-the-counter medications you take. This includes all herbal products and vitamin supplements.

Make sure your provider is aware of any allergies you have.

And be honest about your lifestyle. Do you smoke, drink, or misuse or abuse recreational drugs? All of these can have an impact on how a prescription medication works with your body.

Make sure you understand the purpose of the new medication.

What does it do? How long before it begins to work? How do you know it is working? How often do you need to take it? What are the possible side effects? Are there any foods you should avoid when taking it? And what do you do if you forget to take a dose?

When you get your new prescription filled double check that it is the correct type and dose.

Make note of the size, color and shape of the medication. If anything changes the next time you fill your prescription, ask your pharmacist to check that it is the correct medication for you.

Get all your prescriptions filled at one pharmacy. That way they will have a complete list of your medications on file and can alert you to any possible drug interactions.

Plan to fill your prescriptions early so you don't run out or in case you can't get out of the house because of illness or bad weather.

And when taking some medications, wear medical identification.

Ask your healthcare provider or pharmacist how to get a medical alert bracelet.

To make sure your medications work correctly, take them exactly as prescribed by your healthcare provider.

This includes taking your medication at the same time each day. Do not miss a dose.

You may take your medication through injection, patch, or inhalation device. If so, review your techniques with your healthcare provider on a regular basis to ensure you are taking your medications correctly.

And finally, if you are worried about the cost of your medications, talk to your healthcare provider. You may qualify for a prescription assistance plan that can help you get them at a lower cost.

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Don't take less of your medication than is prescribed if you are trying to save money because the dose and amount prescribed are necessary for the medication to be effective.

When it comes to medications, there is a level of trust between you and your healthcare provider. You trust them to prescribe the best medication for you. And they trust you to take it as directed.

Make taking your medications a regular part of your daily life and take them safely and consistently to achieve your overall health goals.