

Taking Your Medications Safely

To get all the positive benefits from your medications that you need, it is important you take them safely. Here are some guidelines.

Develop a system to keep track of all your medications, especially if you take more than one kind.

Some people find a pill organizer helpful.

Some people use a checklist or calendar and cross off the medication as it's taken.

And others post little reminders around the house or set an alarm, so they don't forget.

Place your medications where you can see them during your normal daily routine. This will help you avoid missing a dose.

Keep an updated list of all the medications you are taking and their doses.

Always carry it with you when you leave the house.

Share the list with a family member or friend who can or may have to speak for you.

Share this list with all of your healthcare providers including your dentist. And your pharmacist.

Many medications need to be stored in a cool, dry place out of direct sunlight. Your medicine cabinet in the bathroom may not be the best place because of moisture. Some medications need to be refrigerated.

Never store different medications in the same bottle.

If you live with someone who also takes medications, be careful not to get your bottles mixed up. This is especially important if you take pain medications or other controlled substances.

Try storing your medications on a different shelf or in another cabinet. Some pharmacies offer different bottle colors for each family member.

Keep medications in a secure place, out of the reach and sight of children.

Medications are not meant to share. Don't borrow medications from friends or family members.

Remember, your healthcare provider has prescribed your specific medication and dose based on your condition, lifestyle, and other medications you take – not your friend's.

Because of this, do not take any new medications, herbs, vitamins, nutrition supplements, or over the counter medications without first talking to your healthcare provider.

And do not take more of your medication than is prescribed.

If you think you need a stronger dose, talk to your healthcare provider.

Taking Your Medications Safely

Do not take medications that have expired or have been discontinued by your provider.

Taking your medications as prescribed can help you maintain good health. Take them safely to get all the benefits they can provide. Talk to your healthcare provider about more ways to ensure the safety of your medications.