

## Mind Your Meds

### Simple Things You Can Do to Manage Your Meds

Hints for Health from Elara Caring



### Be In the Know

- ✓ Read the Label ~ It's filled with useful information!
- ✓ Pay attention to warning stickers. They include important information like whether to take a med with or without food.
- ✓ Expiration Date: Never keep meds that are expired. They may not be as effective or they could even become toxic.
- ✓ Know which meds can affect your sense of balance or make you sleepy. The most common culprits are pain meds. When taking these meds, always use your assistive devices and extra caution.



### Check It Off

- ✓ Keep a list of your current meds and allergies with you. Don't forget over-the-counter meds, vitamins, herbal remedies and supplements. Even "natural" remedies can have interactions and side effects with other medicines or even food.
- ✓ "Bag" Your List ~ If you have meds that change often, write each one on a separate index card and keep them in a resealable plastic bag. When a med is discontinued, changed or added, simply remove or add cards as needed. This way you don't have to rewrite a whole new list every time.
- ✓ There are various apps available for your smart phone or tablet which can help you catalog and organize your medications. Many of these apps can even send you notifications and reminders when it's time for a dose. Only download trusted apps from Google Play Store (Android) or Apple Store (iOS/iPhone/iPad).

# Mind Your Meds



## Keep Everyone on the Same Page

- ✓ Make sure ALL your healthcare providers are aware of ALL of your meds and any changes.
- ✓ Use the same pharmacy for all of your prescriptions:  
Your pharmacist can help watch for common medication errors like:
  - Multiple drugs prescribed for the same medical issue.
  - Generic and brand name drugs which overlap.
  - Drugs which contain ingredients to which you are allergic.
  - The same drug prescribed by more than one healthcare provider.



## Timing Matters

- ✓ Take your medicine at the same time every day. This allows you and your care provider to determine if it is working effectively.
- ✓ If you miss a dose, do not double the dose. Most of the time you can take the dose as soon as you realize you missed it and then re-time the other dosages. If you're concerned, talk to your Elara Caring Clinician or doctor.
- ✓ If you wait until you are out of your meds to get a refill, you've waited too long! Delays due to low inventory, weather or shipping can cause gaps in your med regime. Plan ahead so that you never have to miss a dose.



## Medication Matters

- ✓ Never take a med that was prescribed for someone else. You might be allergic to the drug, be taking other drugs which can interact poorly, the dosage could be too much or too little for you... it's not worth the risk!
- ✓ Report side effects. In many cases, there is more than one med available so work with your doctor to find the one that is best for you!
- ✓ If you use a med-minder/med sorter, keep the original bottle with at least ONE pill left in it just in case you need to identify a med that is in the sorter.
- ✓ Count the Cost ~ Medications can really help your health... but hurt your pocketbook! If a med is too expensive, talk to your pharmacist or doctor. There may be a generic, coupon or discount available.
- ✓ Safely Destroy Meds ~ Instead of flushing down the toilet, most meds should be mixed with unpleasant trash such as coffee grounds or kitty litter and thrown away with the household trash. Your local community may also offer "Drug Take Back" days or locations where medications can be disposed of safely in a central location. Always follow specific label recommendations regarding disposal.

Do you have questions or concerns?

We Can Help

[elara.com](http://elara.com)