

How to Manage Your Medications

Important things to do regarding your medications:

- Store your medications in a cool, dry place (not the refrigerator) unless specified by your pharmacist
- Tell your doctor or pharmacist about **ALL** of the medications you are taking **BEFORE** taking something new.
- Consult your physician regularly to see whether there are any medications you can cut back on or stop taking together.
- Post phone numbers of your emergency medical service, hospital, pharmacy and physician.
- Call your physician immediately if you experience an unpleasant or unusual reaction to a medicine.
- Be sure to understand all instructions before starting to use a drug...including when to take it, with what, how long to continue, and what to do if problems occur.
- Make sure you take your medicines when you are supposed to.
- If you find labels hard to read, ask the pharmacist for larger type labels.
- Keep a permanent record of all drugs and vaccines you are sensitive or allergic to.
- Follow your doctor's recommendations and schedule for taking your medicine. If you have trouble taking your medicines as directed, whether because of an inconvenient schedule, hard-to-follow instructions or just an expensive prescription, let your doctor know. It may be possible to make your treatment easier or prescribe less expensive drugs.

Important things NOT to do regarding your medications:

- Do not exchange drugs with anyone. What is right for you may not be right for someone else.
- Do not take medicines in the dark. Bottles and pills can look the same. Read the labels carefully EACH time you take the drug.
- Do not try to second-guess your doctor. Carefully follow instructions for taking the medicine properly.
- Do not discontinue your medication without consulting your physician...even if you feel better.
- Do not take medicines that have passed their expiration dates or those with color changes.