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NAVIGATING YOUR HEALTH CARE SERIES



# MEDICATION SAFETY

## WE ALL KNOW HOW IMPORTANT MEDICINES ARE IN KEEPING US HEALTHY, BUT THEY CAN BE DANGEROUS IF NOT USED CORRECTLY OR WHEN THEY ARE TAKEN BY SOMEONE ELSE THEY WERE NOT PRESCRIBED FOR. HERE ARE SOME TIPS ON HOW TO USE YOUR MEDICINE SAFELY:



### **Ask Questions!**

Follow all the directions on the medicine bottle and ask your doctor or pharmacist if you have questions about how to take any of them.

Tell your doctor before you start taking any over-the-counter medicines or herbal supplements. Just because they are available without a prescription or that they are “all natural” does not mean they will be safe for you.

Don't skip doses or stop taking any of your medicines before first talking with your doctor even if you are feeling better or don't think the medicine is working.

Pay attention to how you are feeling and let your doctor or pharmacist know if you think your medicine is making you sick or causing you pain.

Schedule a time to meet with your pharmacist to go over each medicine you take and important things to know like what each medicine is used for, storage instructions, and what to expect.



### **Be Safe!**

Double check that you have received the right medicine before taking it. If it looks different, ask the pharmacist.

Keep your medicines in the bottles they come in and don't put different medicines in the same bottle.

Use the same pharmacy for all your medicines so the pharmacist can make sure that there are no issues taking them together.

Keep an updated list of your medicines with you or on your phone at all times that includes the name, the directions, and the reason you take each of your medicines.

Set an alarm on your watch or phone to remember when to take your medicines and record that you have taken them each time.



### **Keep Others Safe!**

Lock up your medicines and keep them in a place that children – including teenagers – cannot see or reach.

Never share your prescription medicines since they could be harmful to others.

Take expired or unused medicines to a medicine drop box found at local police departments and pharmacies. Clean out your medicine cabinet as each New Year begins.

For liquid medicines, only use the dosing device that comes with the medicine since using kitchen teaspoons and tablespoons may result in the wrong amount.

Save the poison control center number in your phone or put it on your refrigerator in case of emergency:  
**1-800-222-1222**

Call 911 if the person has passed out, is having trouble breathing, or has a seizure.