

Medication Safety for Older Adults



Keep a list of your medications

Older adults are more likely to take multiple medications, including over-the-counter medications. This increases the risk for reactions, such as falls, depression, confusion and malnutrition.

Maintain an updated, complete list of medications you take, including prescription and non-prescription (over-the-counter) medicines, natural and herbal remedies, as well as any vitamins or supplements.

Carry your list of medications in your purse or wallet, or store it on your mobile phone. Bring it with you to every doctor appointment, as well as to the pharmacy when you pick up your prescriptions. Share your list with a trusted loved one or friend, in case of emergency.

Information to include:

- **What you take:** The medicine's generic and brand names (if known)
- **Why you take it:** The symptoms or conditions the medication is intended to treat
- **How much you take:** The prescribed dosage, usually in milligrams (mg) and
- **How often you take it:** The frequency with which you take it (e.g., once daily, three times a day)
- **When you take it:** The time of day you take the medication (e.g., at bedtime, with dinner)
- **Who told you to take it and when:** The name of the doctor or other health care professional who prescribed the medication and when you started taking it, or the last time the dosage or frequency was changed (increased or decreased).