

10 Things You Can Do To Help Prevent Medication Errors

1. Ask questions to help you understand.

Ask the doctor what drug he is giving you and the strength of the drug. You can repeat the medication instructions back to the doctor to make sure you understand how to take your prescription.

2. Read your prescription.

Make sure that you can read what the doctor has written on your prescription. Make sure that the drug and the directions are clear. If not, ask if you can have them printed out.

3. Know what the drug is for.

Ask the doctor what condition the drug is for, and make sure you know how to take the drug.

4. Look at the label on your prescription.

When the pharmacist gives you your prescription, make sure that the drug on the label is the same one your doctor prescribed. Make sure that the directions on the label are the same as what the doctor told you, and that you understand them.

5. Ask the pharmacist to explain your prescription to you.

Ask the pharmacist what the drug does and how it works. Make sure you know what side effects the drug can cause and what you should do if they occur. Ask the pharmacist how you can take the prescription so that the drug will work most effectively.

6. Ask for printed information about your prescription.

Ask the pharmacist if you can have an information sheet about your drug.

7. Look at the medication each time you get a refill.

When you pick up a refill of your drug, make sure that the drug looks the same. Check the colour, size and shape of the prescription to make sure it is the same as your first one. If the prescription does not look the same, ask your pharmacist to make sure it is the right drug. Sometimes it will be the same drug but look different.

8. Make a list of all your medications.

Keep a list of your medications including their names, what they look like and how you should take it. Make sure you keep the list updated.

9. Buy a drug information book.

Buy a book that has colour pictures and information on your medication. You can also find internet guides that have this same information.

10. If you have difficulty seeing ask for help.

If you are unable to see your medication let the pharmacist know. Ask them to use different types and sizes of containers so that you can tell your medications apart from each other.