



Health And Well-Being

Smart Ways To Manage Medications

(NAPSA)—The good news is, prescription medications can improve your health. A problem, however, can be that the more drugs you're prescribed, the more likely you are to forget to take them, according to a new national survey by Medco Health Solutions, Inc.

The survey found that more than half of Americans aged 65 and older take at least five different prescription drugs regularly and one in four take between 10 and 19 pills each day. What's more, 63 percent of seniors prescribed five or more medications forget to take them and nearly one in four neglect to fill their prescriptions on time.

This can lead to complications and even hospitalizations. Using many different medications and visiting different doctors can raise the chances of missing doses or improperly following prescription directions.

Here are some tips to help you manage your medications:

Keep medications in a common place: Choose a location that makes your medications easy to spot, such as on the kitchen counter, as a reminder to take them. Always keep medicines in their original containers and remember to keep them out of sight and reach of children.

Alert yourself: Try setting an alarm or asking a trusted family member or friend to call to remind you to take your medications. Many pharmacies offer e-mail refill reminders when you use their mail-order pharmacy.

Keep a personal medication record: Writing down all the medicines you take—including over-the-counter drugs, vitamins and



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supplements—and sharing that list with your doctor or pharmacist can help reduce the risk of a harmful drug interaction. Important details to include on that list are the dosages, how you take the medication and the condition it treats.

When traveling, consider time-zone changes: If you're traveling to a different time zone, ask your pharmacist about how to adjust your schedule so you can avoid missing doses. The adjustment will vary according to the type of medication you take.

Being knowledgeable about your medications is important when it comes to controlling health risks and decreasing your health care costs.

You can learn more about properly managing your medications by reading a free booklet called "The Smart Guide to Managing Medications."

Free Brochure

Go to www.Medcomedicare.com to get an electronic version of the guide or send a postcard with your name and address to "The Smart Guide to Managing Medications," P.O. Box 8007, Parsippany, NJ 07054-8007.