

# Health Awareness

## Let's Talk About Rx: Tips To Help Seniors Avoid Medication Mishaps

(NAPSA)—With multiple doctors and specialists, a variety of dosage instructions and an alternating schedule of refills, managing a medication regimen can be daunting for anyone, especially seniors—but heeding a few hints can help.

### The Problem

A recent survey conducted by Home Instead, Inc.—franchisor of the Home Instead Senior Care network, the world's leading provider of in-home care services for seniors—found that nearly one-fifth of seniors taking five or more prescription medications daily have experienced challenges, including keeping track of which medications they have taken and when. This type of medication management uncertainty can lead to devastating consequences—from an adverse drug interaction to the need to move to a nursing home. Moreover, this potential risk only multiplies as seniors age or as the number of prescription medications increases.

This can be a difficult subject for families to discuss. In many cases, seniors have been managing this aspect of their lives on their own for many years and may not be fully aware of potential pitfalls.

### Some Suggestions

To help families have this critical conversation, Dr. Jane Potter, a noted geriatrician, offers these tips and resources to help seniors stay safe and independent at home and prevent a potentially life-threatening medication mishap.

- Have a family member accompany seniors to the doctor to ask questions and ensure that they understand all the medications they are prescribed and why.



**Managing multiple medications can be difficult but help is available.**

- Create a list of current prescription medications, over-the-counter medications and any vitamins the senior is taking. Share this list with all medical professionals involved in the senior's care and keep it updated with any changes.

- Make one doctor the gatekeeper to manage medications and discuss any potential problems with a medication, such as the inability to swallow a pill or a change in a senior's appearance or demeanor.

- Use medication organizers, such as a pillbox or printed medication tracker. Consider ordering medications from a pharmacy such as Simple Meds that provides prepackaged doses of medications and vitamins to help people stay on track.

- Be on the lookout for any red flags, such as a full pill bottle, which may mean the medication is not being taken. If this does occur or you have any other concerns about the medication regimen, contact the doctor.

### Learn More

To learn more about these recommendations and resources or to view a free solutions guide, visit [www.LetsTalkAboutRx.com](http://www.LetsTalkAboutRx.com) or call a Home Instead office.