

# Health Hints

## For Quality Health Care, Pick The Right Pharmacist

(NAPSA)—Taking a simple step can go a long way toward helping your health. While many people research their doctors so they will feel comfortable and confident with the health care they receive, few do the same for their pharmacists.

Unfortunately, studies suggest patients forget 80 percent of what the doctor tells them about their medication once they leave the office, and half of what they do remember is incorrect.

“People should apply the same standards they use when selecting a doctor to their choice of pharmacists,” said Terry Burnside, president of Medicine Shoppe International, Inc., a nationwide franchise pharmacy system. “The pharmacist-customer relationship should be a comfortable one, where the customer can ask questions and feel confident about taking medications.”

To find the right pharmacist, consider visiting local pharmacies, asking friends and family for recommendations or researching pharmacies that are industry leaders in quality care.

Spending time to select both a quality doctor and pharmacist will help strengthen the entire health care team. When a doctor and pharmacist work in sync, errors and potential problems can be identified and resolved quickly. With the average senior taking between four and six prescription medications on top of two or more over-the-counter medications, the importance of a good doctor-pharmacist relationship should not be overlooked.

Look for a pharmacist who:

1. Is willing to proactively explain your medications to you, including potential side effects and dosage instructions.
2. Is eager to develop a relationship with you and make you



**It's a healthy idea to find a pharmacist who will work with you to best meet your needs.**

comfortable sharing your medical history.

3. Identifies possible drug interactions, cost-saving alternatives or potential side effects and will work with your doctor when a medication switch might be needed.

4. Takes time to answer your health and medication questions.

5. Visits with you personally, rather than you just seeing a technician.

Many people have found pharmacists who focus on personal attention and quality counsel at Medicine Shoppe Pharmacies. In fact, according to a survey by Wilson Health Information, they consistently rank first in overall customer satisfaction. Survey respondents also ranked them at the top in the ability to speak with a pharmacist about questions or concerns, obtain information about medications and avoid side effects, get clear instructions and receive help with insurance problems.

Spending time researching pharmacists when you are well can help you get the time, consideration and care you need when you are ill.