

Health Bulletin



Tips To Help Seniors Reduce Medication Errors

(NAPSA)—For many seniors, taking medication is part of their daily routine. And the last thing that seniors need is to worry about a medication error. Unfortunately, errors do occur, but they can be prevented through special attention and careful monitoring.

As part of its work in patient safety, United States Pharmacopeia (USP) has created a list of “Tips” for seniors and their caregivers on how to better manage the medication use process and decrease the risk of medication errors.

1. Check the label when you get a prescription to verify that you’re receiving the proper medication. If possible, read back the prescription to your pharmacist or health care provider.

2. When possible, keep all medication in original containers.

3. Know what to do if you miss a dosage, and always remember to contact your health care provider or pharmacist if you have any doubts.

4. Try to fill all prescriptions at the same pharmacy.

5. Read the patient information sheet that accompanies your medication.

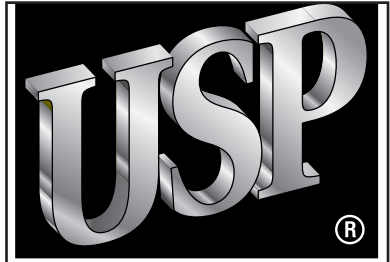
6. Should there be a change in the color size, shape or smell of your medication, notify your pharmacist immediately.

7. Do not share or take another person’s medications.

8. When in doubt about a medication you are taking, always consult your pharmacist and/or health care provider! And remember to ask about any side effects that you might experience or expect.

9. When in the hospital:

a. State your name before taking any medications and always offer your wrist bracelet for identification. Ask the nurse to identify each medication by name before you take it.



U.S. Pharmacopeia
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b. If your medication has not been given at its regular time during your hospital stay, inquire of the nurse as to why.

c. Remind your health care provider if you have any allergies to certain medications and food or if you also have a health condition that could affect the use of certain medications.

10. Also remember to tell your health care provider if you are taking any dietary supplements or over-the-counter medications.

11. Finally, create a list of all the medications you’re taking.

This list should be updated on a monthly basis and a copy should be kept with you at all times. Also keep copies at your home and share with family members and friends who need to know where your personal medication list is located.

Free Medication Organizer

USP has created a Personal Medication Organizer for use in organizing and accounting for the medications you are taking. To obtain this organizer, visit www.usp.org/pdf/patientSafety/personalMedOrg.pdf.

For more information about USP, visit www.usp.org.