

Getting A New Prescription Can Be A Hard Pill To Swallow

A lot of people have concerns about taking a new medicine. They wonder if it will work, what side effects might occur, and how long they will need to take it.

Don't be afraid to ask questions – even if you have taken a medicine for a long time.

For each of your medicines, you should know:

Name and strength

Keeping a written list of the name and strength (dosage) of each of your medicines can be helpful when seeing your doctor or in an emergency situation.

The symptoms, illness or health problems it will treat or prevent

Sometimes it's easy to tell if a medicine is working. But, sometimes it's not. For example, blood pressure medicines can lower your blood pressure without making you feel any different. Only measuring your blood pressure can tell you if the medicine is working. So be sure to ask your doctor or pharmacist, "How will I know if this medicine is working?"

Some medicines can decrease symptoms in days. Others might take several weeks before their full effects are felt. Ask how long it will take before you know if the medicine will work for you.

The best time of day to take the medicine

Some medicines are best taken in the morning, some at night, some with food and others on an empty stomach. If you need to take more than one dose of medicine a day, you should know how far apart to space the doses. Deciding on convenient times to take a medicine is a good idea. Find out, too, what you should do if you forget to take a dose.

How long it should be taken

Medicines may need to be taken for just a few days or weeks or they may be needed for years. Every time you see your doctor ask, "Do I still need to take this medicine?" and "Is this still the right dose for me to take?"

What side effects might occur and how to decrease or prevent them

Every medicine has side effects but many are uncommon. There are often ways to decrease the chance of a side effect occurring.

It's important to know what to do if you think a side effect is occurring. Should you call the doctor, stop the medicine or just keep taking the medicine? Some side effects go away with time; others get worse. Knowing what to do can give you some peace of mind. When in doubt, it is always best to call your doctor or pharmacist.

If it's safe to take with your other prescription medicines, OTC products, vitamins, herbal products and dietary supplements

Yes, drug interactions can occur between prescription medicines and vitamins and herbal supplements! Some medicines even interact with foods. Sometimes you just need to take the doses at different times. In some cases, you should not take medicines with other products. Tell your doctor and pharmacist about all the medicines you are taking and ask them to check for drug interactions.

Where it should be stored

"High and dry" is a good rule of thumb to keep medicines away from children and away from pill-destroying moisture. Some medicines, though, may need to be kept in the refrigerator and all medicines need to be kept out of hot summer heat. Many people choose to keep their medicines in a spot that helps them remember to take them.

How much it will cost

Concerns about medication costs are common. Don't be embarrassed to ask about a medicine's cost. If a medicine is too expensive, ask for a lower-cost alternative. Many times, another just-as-good medicine is available.

How can you get all the information you need?

To get the information that best fits your situation, you need to ask.

Check out <http://www.JustAskBlue.com>. Our pharmacists have years of experience and can provide you with information based on what you tell us about your needs. Our answers are in writing so you can refer back to the information as often as you wish.

Ask questions. Be informed.