

# Are you taking your medicines safely?

## Reminders to help prevent harmful medicine mishaps

### #1: PARTICIPATE. It's *your* health.



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- It's *your* health. Be an active, assertive participant in your own healthcare. Safe medicine use is a shared responsibility between you, your doctor, the pharmacist, and your other healthcare professionals. It's great if you have someone to help you manage your medicines, but think of yourself as the boss of your own medicines.
- Make a point of discussing your medicines with your doctors and *anyone else* who helps you with your medical care. Make sure each of your healthcare professionals knows all of the medicines you take, including over-the-counter medicines. Also make sure each of your healthcare professionals knows about any vitamins or supplements that you take.
- If you have any questions about your medicine, do not guess! Ask the experts at your poison center, your doctors, or your pharmacists.

### #2: READ & FOLLOW the entire label.



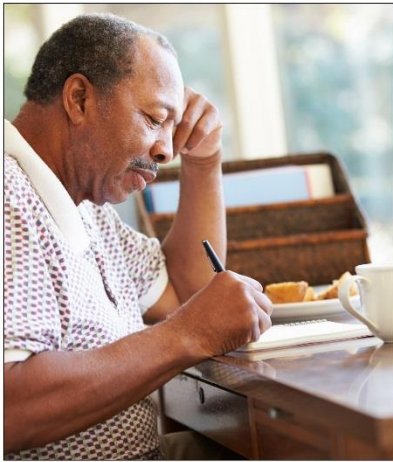
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- Always read and follow the entire label and instructions that come with each of your medicines, *including over-the-counter medicines*.
- Just because you have taken a medicine before doesn't mean it's still safe for you to take now. So, before you stop or start any medicine, check with your doctor or pharmacist.
- If a medicine comes with a dosing device like a cup or syringe, always use that dosing device to measure that medicine. Never use kitchen spoons to administer medicine.
- Keeping medicine in its original, child-resistant container is ideal. However, if you put over-the-counter pills in a pill sorter or anything other than the original packaging, be sure to keep the original packaging so you can refer to the label and instructions.

**POISON**  
**Help**  
**1-800-222-1222**



**#3: WRITE IT DOWN.**



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- Keep an up-to-date list of all of the medicines that you are taking that includes why you are taking each of your medicines, how much medicine to take and when, whether there are certain foods, beverages, or other medicines you should avoid while taking your medicines, and possible side effects of your medicines.
- Bring your medicine list with you whenever you go to a doctor or drugstore. Make sure every doctor you see has a copy for your chart and reviews it at every visit. Ask your doctor to help you keep it updated at every appointment.
- Only take *your* prescription medicines. Never take prescription medicines your doctor has not prescribed for you.
- If possible, get all of your prescription medicines from one pharmacy.

**#4: KEEP MEDICINE, UP, AWAY & OUT OF SIGHT**



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- At home, keep your medicines up, away, and out of sight of children & teens, adult visitors, and pets.
- Keep medicines that you have with you when you're away from home, like in your pocket, purse, or car, in child-resistant containers. Remember that there is no such thing as "childproof" packaging. Do not depend on child-resistant packaging to keep children out of any medicine.
- If you use a pill sorter, use the kind that is child-resistant and keep the pill sorter up and away from children. Also, make sure your pill sorter looks different from anyone else's in your house.
- Do not keep expired or unneeded medicines. To find out how to get rid of your expired or unneeded medicines safely, call your pharmacy or Poison Help at **1 (800) 222-1222**.

**#5: BE PREPARED:  
KNOW WHO TO CALL**



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- Save the Poison Help number in your phone and display it somewhere visible in your house, like on the refrigerator or close to your landline telephone or computer. The number is **1 (800) 222-1222**.
- You can call Poison Help free, any time, year-round, if you have questions about your medicine, if you make a medicine mistake, or if you think you may be experiencing a harmful interaction or side effect. Poison Help calls are private and confidential, and answered by experts you can trust.
- Keep the Poison Help number and the numbers for all of your doctors and your pharmacy in one place, preferably on an up-to-date list of all of the medicines that you take.