

# ***My Medicines:***

*Know, Track, and Share the Information*



*Know the Medicines  
You Take*



*Keep Track of Changes  
to Your Medicines*

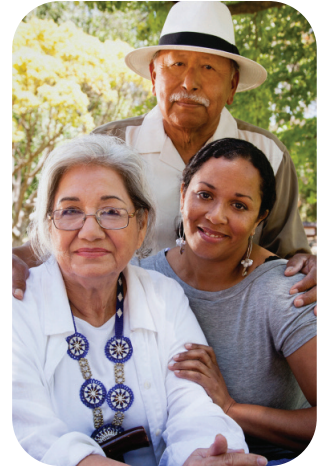


*Share the Information  
With Those Who Take  
Care of You*

### Do You Know What Medicines You Are Taking?

Take the time to learn more about the medicines you are taking. Knowing more about your medicines and taking them correctly can help you stay healthy and avoid problems. It is important for:

- You
- Your family
- Your doctors, and
- Others who help take care of you



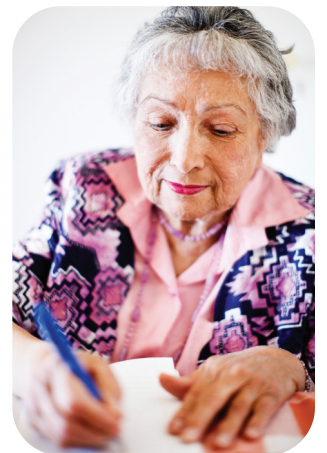
### Take Charge! Keep Track of Your Medicines

You are the most important part of your health care team. Both you and the people who take care of you need to stay up-to-date about the medicines you take. The best way to keep track of your medicines is to write them down.

### Make a List of Your Medicines

Keep a current list of all the medicines you take. This is most important when you take more than one medicine or have more than one doctor. Your doctor can give you a form to help track your medicine if you need one. If you already have a way to keep track of your medicines, that is fine, too. The list should include everything you take:

- Prescription medicines
  - Include pills, inhalers, shots, eye drops
- Vitamins and minerals
  - for example, vitamin D
- Herbal medicines
  - for example, St. John's Wort
- Over-the-counter medicines
  - for example, aspirin or cough syrup



Sometimes medicines can have 2 names—a generic or chemical name and the brand name. It is important that you know both names so that you do not take the same medicine twice by mistake.

### Share Your Medicine List

- Share your medicine list with the people who take care of you
- Make extra copies to give to your doctor and family
- Always carry a copy of the list with you
- Write down any medicine changes made by your doctor or you

### When You Get a New Medicine

- What is the name of this medicine and how do you spell it?
- Does this medicine replace something I already take?
- What is this medicine for?
- How much should I take?
- When should I take it?
- How often should I take it?



## More Things You Can Do to Play an Active Role in Your Care

### At the doctor's office

- Bring ALL of your medicines or a complete list to your appointment
- Tell your doctor about any concerns you may have about your medicines
- Take part in reviewing your medicines with your doctor
- Ask your doctor to make a copy of your medicine list
- Tell your doctor if you have stopped or changed any of your medicines
- Ask questions. It might help to write down the answers or have a family member with you
- Ask your doctor to write down any changes to your medicines

## At the hospital

*When you go to the hospital (on admission)*

- Bring ALL of your medicines or a complete list to the hospital
- Share your list of medicines with the staff
- Let them know if you have any allergies or any problems you have with medicines
- Give the name of your doctor(s) to the staff

*Before you leave the hospital (at discharge)*

- Ask your doctor to explain the treatment plan for when you go home
- Have a family member or friend with you to help you take notes
- Ask for an updated written medicine list
- Ask the doctor or nurse to go over your medicine list with you
- Ask questions about the medicines:
  - What medicine should I stop taking?
  - What new medicines will I be taking?
  - How much of each medicine should I take?
  - What medicines do I need to take the day I leave the hospital?
- Know when you should schedule any follow-up appointments



## **At the pharmacy**

Try to have all of your prescriptions filled at the same pharmacy. It is helpful to have all of your records in one place. Your pharmacist is part of your health care team. He or she can help answer questions about your medicines. Ask your pharmacist for help.

- Ask for written information about your medicine, including possible side effects
- Make sure you can read the label. If not, ask your pharmacist to use bigger print
- Make sure the bottle has your name on it before leaving the pharmacy. If it does not, tell the pharmacist
- Make sure the directions are the same as your doctor discussed with you
- Make sure you can read and understand the directions on the bottle, including:
  - Any special instructions
  - What color-coded warning stickers mean
  - How many refills you have
- Ask for an easy-open cap, if you have trouble opening the bottle. Make sure to keep medicine away from children
- Ask how you should store your medicine
- Ask the best way to throw away your old medicines



## **Ask Questions!**

Ask questions to stay up-to-date about your medicines. It is okay to ask your doctor why you should take a medicine and how you might feel after taking it. The more you know about your medicines, the better! This information can help to keep you safe and healthy. Below are some other questions you may want to ask your doctor or pharmacist each time you get a new medicine.

- When should I stop taking this medicine?
- What should I do if I forget to take a dose?
- What should I do if I take more than I should by mistake?
- Are there side effects that I should know about?
- Can I take this with the other medicines I take?
- Will this medicine affect my driving?
- Where can I find more information about this medicine?

### Other questions I want to ask my doctor:

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### For More Information\*

To learn about taking medicines, you might want to visit some of these Web sites.

#### Administration on Aging (AOA)

[http://www.aoa.gov/AoARoot/AoA\\_Programs/HPW/Med\\_Manage/](http://www.aoa.gov/AoARoot/AoA_Programs/HPW/Med_Manage/).

AOA develops resources that help seniors maintain health and independence. This Web site also helps seniors and caregivers learn more about taking medicines safely.

#### American Society of Health-System Pharmacists (ASHP)

<http://www.ashp.org/menu/InformationFor/Patients.aspx>.

ASHP focuses on improving medication education and enhancing patient safety. This Web site has medicine tips and tools and how to administer medicines such as eye drops and inhalers.

#### Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ)

<http://www.ahrq.gov/consumer/safemeds/yourmeds.htm>.

AHRQ's goal is to improve the quality of health care in the US. This Web site includes a helpful guide and answers to common questions about taking medicines. It also includes forms to help keep track of medicine information.



*\*The Web sites listed are neither owned nor controlled by Pfizer. Pfizer is not responsible for the content or services provided by these sites.*



## **Be MedWise**

<http://www.bemedwise.org/>

Be MedWise is a public education initiative by the National Council on Patient Information and Education (NCPIE). Be MedWise promotes a better understanding of over-the-counter (OTC) medicines and how to take them with care.

## **The Care Transitions Program®**

<http://www.caretransitions.org/transitionskills.asp>

The Care Transitions Program® supports patients, families, and health care professionals to improve the quality-of-care transitions. This Web site provides tools and resources to help make the transition from the hospital to home successful and safe.

## **National Council on Patient Information and Education (NCPIE)**

<http://www.talkaboutrx.org/>

NCPIE works to advance the safe, appropriate use of medicines by enhanced communication. This Web site has several resources on how to take prescription medicines safely and how to work with the health care team.

## **Script Your Future**

<http://scriptyourfuture.org/>

Developed by the National Consumer League, Script Your Future is a public education program to improve consumer awareness about the importance of medication adherence. This Web site has condition-specific (eg, COPD, heart disease) materials and tools to help you learn more about using medicine to stay healthy.

## **Partnership for Prescription Assistance**

[www.pparx.org](http://www.pparx.org)

The Partnership for Prescription Assistance helps qualifying patients without prescription drug coverage get the medicines they need for free or nearly free. This Web site provides a list of Patient Assistance Programs that can be searched by medication name or drug company.

