

# Me and My Medications

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Topic 5

# Understanding My Medication

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**Medication** is another word for medicine.

Medications may help you to feel better.

There are lots of kinds of medications. In you a need medication, your doctor will work with you to find the best one.



# Before Starting Medication

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Before you start a new medication, it is important that you talk to your doctor about:

1. Everything you are currently taking.  
For example, vitamins, natural supplements, or any medicine you purchased from the store.
2. Any allergies you have.





**What questions might you have about a new medication?**

# Before Starting Medication

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## Questions to ask about a new medication:

- What is the medication for?
- What will it do?
- What could the side effects be?
  - What do I do if I experience any?
- How long do I need to take it?
- Is there another way to get better with or without medication?
- How much does it cost?
- Is there lower-cost medication available?



**What information is on a prescription label?**

# Understanding My Prescription Label

This is some of the information that might be on a prescription label:



- Pharmacy's name, address and telephone number
- Prescription number (each prescription has its own number)
- Date prescription is filled
- Your name and address
- Instructions for taking the medication
- Numbers of allowed or required refills
- Expiration date
- Doctor's name that prescribed the medication



**How do you correctly and safely take your medications?**

# Medication Safety

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**How to correctly and safely take your medications:**

- Take the right amount of medication or dose
- Take the medication at the right time
- Do not share your medications with anyone
- Know the side effects you may experience and if they are typical or if you are having a bad reaction.
- Store your medication properly (In the cabinet, refrigerator, etc.)



**What do you do to help remind you to take your medication?**

# Medication Reminders

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To remind you to take your medication:

- Use a timer
- Place a reminder note where you can see it
- Have a support person help you remember
- Have the medication visible and part of a daily routine, like brushing your teeth
- Use a medication box to help organize your pills for the correct time and day

# What to Do if There is a Problem

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**Taking the right medications helps you get better.**

But, sometimes, they might not be right for you. It can take time to find the right kind of medication.

When you start a new medication, it helps to let someone besides your doctor know. They can help you watch for any changes.

# Signs of Medication Problems

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- Throwing up (vomiting)
- Getting a rash on your skin
- Confused
- Sweating
- Feeling too sleepy
- Speaking too slow or fast



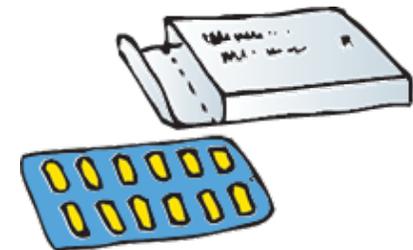
**If you have any of these signs, call your doctor right away or if it is extreme call 911!**

# What Did I Learn?

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I can take charge of my health care when I:

- Make good choices about my medication.
- Know what my medications are.
- Follow the right way to take my medication.
- Know what to do when there is a problem.
- Ask my doctor or pharmacist for more information.



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