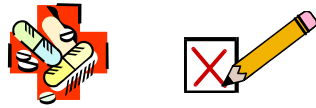


## *Finals Tips on Managing Your Medications*



- *Write down what medicine you take and what times to take them;*
- *Color code the prescription bottles;*
- *Use a check off chart for each day of the week when you take your medicine.*



- *Know what medicines you are taking;*
- *Follow the directions given to you by your doctor and pharmacist;*
- *Ask questions if you do not understand.*

## *Chinese Hospital Pharmacy*

*845 Jackson Street*

*Phone: 415-677-2430*

# *How to Manage Your Medications*

*Chinese Hospital*



*The Do's and Don't on Medication Management*



### *Medicines are **Powerful Chemicals.***

*They're used to treat diseases, heal injuries and relieve pain.*

*Or*

*They can be menaces: used carelessly, medicines can cause unexpected danger. Instead of relieving symptoms, they can cause poisoning and in some cases, death.*

#### ***The medicines you should know about include:***

- *Prescription Drugs: drugs that require a prescription from your Doctor and sold by a pharmacist*
- *Over-the-Counter Drugs: drugs that you can purchase yourself without a prescription*
- *Herbal Drugs*

### ***Medicines have Risks as well as Benefits***

*The more medicines you take, the greater the risks of harmful side effects, dangerous combinations, etc*

### ***It's Important to Know the Medications You Take***

## ***Some Don'ts***



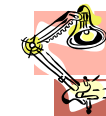
*Don't discontinue your medication or change dosage without talking with your doctor, even if you're feeling better.*



*Don't transfer medicines to other containers, unless OK'd by your pharmacist or doctor.*



*Don't use someone else's medication or give yours to another person.*



*Don't take medicines in the dark-turn on the lights to avoid taking the wrong medicine.*



*Don't keep medicines that have lost their labels, medicines that have passed their expiration dates or those that look changed or old.*



*Don't take medicines unless you understand all the instructions for using them safely.*

## Some Do's

Call your Doctor immediately if you experience unpleasant or unusual reactions to a medicine.



Store medicines properly. Always read the label for special storage instructions.



Keep medicines away from children-out of sight and out of reach



Consult your Doctor regularly to see whether there are any medicines you can cut back on or stop taking altogether.



Throw away old or expired medicine by dumping them in the toilet and flushing. Discard old containers.



Post important phone numbers in your home of your emergency medical service, hospital, pharmacy and doctor.



## Potential Risks of Medicines

**Side Effects:** The seriousness of any side effect depends on the medicine and the person taking it. Some side effects are very minor. Others may require your physician to substitute another medicine.

- To help minimize side effects, learn what side effects to expect before taking any medicine. Read the labels on medicines, and consult your doctor, nurse or pharmacist if you have any questions. Report any reactions or allergies to your doctor.

**Unexpected Interactions:** Many medicines can react harmfully when taken together. One medicine may make another more powerful, or keep it from working at all. They may even combine to create serious side effects.

- To help prevent drug interactions, tell your doctor and pharmacist about all medicines you're taking-including over-the-counter and herbal remedies. **Bring a list.**

**Taking too many medications:** Many people have more than one disease or disorder, requiring treatment with different medications. While these medications may benefit you, they may also pose serious risks unless you use them with care.

- To avoid taking too many drugs, always know what you're using and why. Follow all instructions for using drugs safely. Make sure any over-the-counter medications you buy are safe to use with your prescription medicines. **Ask your pharmacist.**

**Drug Dependence:** Habit-forming medicines have benefits, but they have risks, too. Long term use of some medications may lead to addiction.

- To help prevent drug dependence, always ask your Doctor if any medicine prescribed to you is habit-forming. Know how much you can safely take without danger of addiction.

*Using Your Medications Safely-  
is a matter of knowledge and common sense.*

## **Guard Against Common Mishaps**

### **Taking the Wrong Dose:**

*Taking too much medicine can cause an overdose. Taking too little can keep the medicine from doing its job. Always take the **exact** amount prescribed.*



### **Mixing medicines and foods:**

*Many foods and drinks react badly with medicines.*

*Follow your doctor's orders regarding any foods you should avoid while on medication.*

### **Incorrect Scheduling:**

*Take all medicines at the times indicated. (Read the label and follow your doctor's orders.) If you do miss a dose, don't double the dosage later.*

### **Taking the wrong medicine:**

*To minimize the risk, keep medicines in their original containers, and always check the label before you take any medicine.*



## **Don't Mix Medicines and Alcohol**

*Did you know: that drinking alcohol while on certain medications ( including both prescription and some over-the-counter medicines) can be dangerous? Of the 100 medicines prescribed most often, over half contain at least one ingredient that reacts badly with alcohol.*

***Potential Effects:** of mixing alcohol and medicine vary with the medicine and the person taking it. They may range from drowsiness to liver damage, coma or even death.*

### **How to protect yourself:**

- *If you drink, be sure to discuss your drinking habits with your doctor;*
- *Read medicine labels or consult your pharmacist to find out if any medicines you are taking react badly with alcohol;*
- *Don't mix alcohol and medicines unless you know it is safe to do so.*