



Taking Your Medicine – The Do's & Don'ts!

Who hasn't taken Tylenol® when they've had a headache or popped a TUMS® when their stomach was upset? Although these activities seem harmless on the surface, it is important to understand how to take medications properly, whether they are prescription, over the counter medications, vitamins or herbal supplements.

Taking medication is a daily part of life for many of us, whether we take it to relieve pain, treat an illness or manage a chronic disease. However, more than 700,000 people will be hospitalized this year in the United States because of medication mix-ups, many of which could have been avoided if simple precautions had been taken.

Taking your medication properly will help keep you healthy and avoid trips to the doctor, or heaven forbid, the Emergency Room. We've pulled together the most important things you need to know in order to keep you and your loved ones safe and become medication "savvy."



Medication "Do's."

- Take your medication exactly as it has been prescribed or as listed on the label
- Take **all** of your medications with you to each doctor visit
- Be sure to take OTC and Vitamin/Herbal supplements
- Use the same pharmacy for filling prescriptions
- Keep all medications out of the reach of children.
- Use daily/weekly pill boxes to keep medication organized
- Set alarms on your alarm clock or cell phone to remind you to take your medication.



Medication "Don'ts."

- Don't stop taking – or change the way that you take – any prescribed medication without talking with your doctor first
- Don't take someone else's medication
- Do not cut or crush your medication unless directed to do so by your doctor
- Don't take expired medication
- Don't stop taking antibiotic, until you've taken the last pill.



Know Your Medication "Rights!"

Before taking any medication, be sure that it is:

- The right medication
- For the right person
- In the right amount
- At the right time
- Taken in the right way.

The best way to keep track of your medication is by keeping a list of those that you take, and update it frequently. Remember, a medication can be prescribed, an over-the-counter product, a vitamin or an herbal supplement. Keep track of all of them, and keep you doctor in the loop, in order to avoid any possible negative interactions.



Here is what you should track:

Medication name (both brand and generic)	
Size, color & imprint on pill	
Dosage	
Common side effects	
What to do for side effects	
When to call your doctor	
Other special instructions	



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