

## WHAT I NEED TO KNOW ABOUT EACH MEDICINE THAT I TAKE

- What is the name of each medicine?
- What is it for?
- What time should I take it?
- How much of it should I take each time?
- How should I take it?
- Should I take it with food?
- How long should I take it?
- What should I do if I miss a dose?
- Are there any side effects? What should I do if I have any?
- Is it safe to take with other medicine that I am taking, including over-the-counter medicine, vitamins, or herbals?
- What food, drink, or activities should I avoid while taking it?



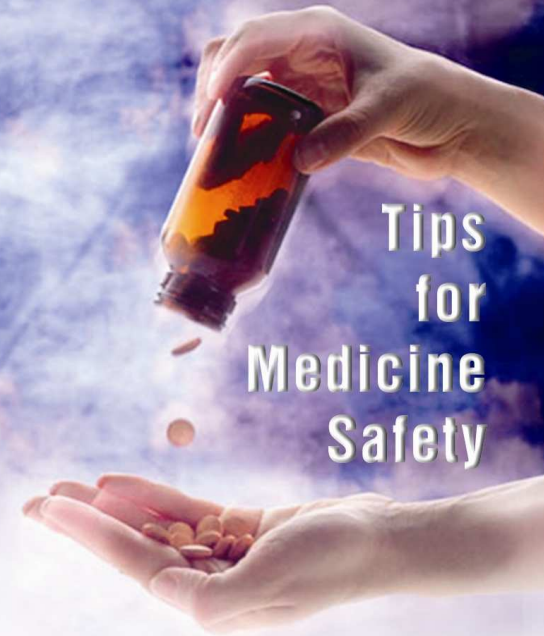
Taking an active role in your care can help prevent medicine errors.



**Maintain your personal  
UNIVERSAL MEDICATION  
FORM  
and keep it in your  
wallet/purse for easy access.  
Forms are available at :  
[www.nmhhsa.org](http://www.nmhhsa.org)**

Thanks to the South Carolina Hospital Association and special thanks to the Massachusetts Coalition for the Prevention of Medical Errors, AHRQ, and JCAHO.

## What You Need to Know About Your Medicine

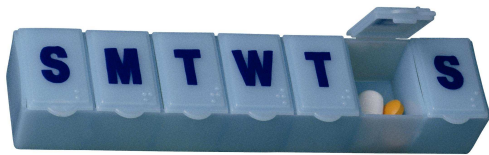


**Tips  
for  
Medicine  
Safety**

**New Mexico  
Hospital  
Association**

## AT HOME

- Take only the medicine given to you by your doctor or pharmacist. Do not share other people's medicine.
- Each time you take your medicine, read the label to make sure you are taking it correctly. If you have questions, call your doctor or pharmacist
- Never take medicine in the dark.
- Do not stop taking the medicine just because you feel better unless your doctor tells you to stop taking it.
- Do not take your medicine out of one bottle and put it in another one.
- Put all of your medicine in a place where children and pets cannot reach it.
- Keep your **Universal Medication Form** updated.
- If you take medicine each day, using a compartmental medication box may be helpful.



- Do not keep medicine in the car, by the stove, or in the bathroom, since heat and dampness can affect how it works.
- Check the date on all medicine. Throw away all medicine if the date written on it has passed.
- If you feel that any medicine is making you sick or causing you pain, call your doctor right away.

## IN THE HOSPITAL

- When you are admitted to the hospital, take your updated **Universal Medication Form**, or bring all of your medicines in the original bottles. Include over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, and herbals.
- Tell your doctor or nurse about any allergies or reactions that you have had to medicine in the past. Also, write these on your **Universal Medication Form**.
- If you feel that any medicine is making you sick or causing you pain, tell the doctor or nurse right away.
- When you are being sent home from the hospital, ask your doctor or nurse to clearly tell you what medicines you should be taking, and how to take them. You will



be given an updated **Universal Medication Form** before you leave the hospital.

**You Should Never Be Afraid To Ask Your Doctor, Nurse, or Pharmacist About Your Medicines.**

**Your Health Is Too Important!**

**SPEAK UP!**

## AT THE DRUGSTORE

- Take new medicine prescriptions and refills to the same drugstore. The pharmacist then has a list of your medicines. He or she can make sure that all of the medicine works together and will not make you sick.
- If you use more than one drugstore, make sure each one has a list of all of your medicine.
- Ask the pharmacist the name of the medicine and how you should take it. Make sure that this information matches what your doctor told you.
- Make sure that any refill of the medicine is the same color, size, and shape. If there is any difference, ask why.
- If you have **ANY** questions about your medicine, ask your pharmacist.



## AT THE DOCTOR'S OFFICE

- Always take your updated **Universal Medication Form**. This will tell your doctor everything you are taking, including prescription medicines, over-the-counter medicines, and herbals.
- Tell your doctor about any allergies or reactions that you have had to medicine in the past.

