



REDUCING MEDICATION ERRORS HOW YOU CAN HELP

Taking medications incorrectly is one of the most common medical errors in America today. UT Southwestern Medical Center is committed to both safety and the quality of patient care. We would like to ask for your help in reducing your risk of a medication error.

Medication errors occur for many reasons:

- Most patients have more than one healthcare provider writing prescriptions.
- Information regarding prescription changes by one physician is not always communicated to other physicians.
- Every drug has at least two names, the generic and the brand name. This can be very confusing and can result in accidental duplication of medications.
- Medications can cause side effects by interacting with other medications.

In order to minimize your risk of a medication error, we encourage you to do the following:

1. Bring all of your medications or a complete, accurate list of your current medications and dietary supplements to each clinic visit or whenever you are admitted to the hospital. Please make sure that your list contains the exact information as it is written on the label including name of the medication, dosage, directions, and the prescribing physician.

2. Review your medication list carefully with your physician, or nurse, at each visit to ensure you are taking the correct medicines.
3. Always know why you are taking a medication. If you are given a medication you don't recognize, ask what it is and why you are taking it.
4. When in the hospital, review the list of medications being prescribed for you with your physician, or nurse, at the time you are discharged. Carefully compare your admission medications with your discharge medications to ensure you are aware of any changes. Be sure to ask your provider to clarify any questions you may have.
5. When discharged from the hospital, always take your list of discharge medications with you to your next clinic visit so your physician can update your outpatient medical records.
6. Discard out of date, or discontinued, medications regularly.
7. Know the names of medications that have caused you adverse reactions in the past. Write down the name of the medication and the reaction, and be sure that your physician(s) and pharmacy know of the reaction.

Your health is our top priority and we want to work carefully with you to avoid medication errors.

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