

Where Ignorance Is Not Bliss!

Managing Your Medicines Part II

By Moira Fordyce M.D, MB ChB, FRCPE, AGSF



Medication used safely can work wonders. The more you know about the ones you are taking, whether prescribed, bought at the pharmacy, herbal or alternative therapies, the better partner you can be in your own health and preventive care.

1 *To keep track of your medicines make a schedule, use a calendar and/or a pill container*

Mark on the calendar when you take your medicine or use a pill container with sections labeled for each day of the week (there are many different kinds available, some of which beep to remind you to take a dose). At the beginning of the week put all your pills in the correct slots, then all you have to do is look and you will know whether you have taken them each day. An empty egg box labeled with the days of the week can make a useful container.

2 *Ask if there are any activities you should avoid while taking the medicine*

The ability to drive and operate machinery can be impaired by some medicines.

3 *Store your medicines correctly – ask your doctor or pharmacist for the right place*

Not in sunlight, not in a warm place, not on the television set.

4 *Don't keep your medicines on your bedside table*

It's all right to put one dose there if you need to take it in the middle of the night, but some people waken, and while drowsy forget they've had a dose and if the whole bottle is there, take another. Don't take your medicine in the dark and never try to swallow it while lying down.

5 *Keep medicines in their original container (apart from the doses you have put in the pill container)*

Have them clearly labeled with your name, the name of the medicine, the dosage schedule and the expiration date.

6 *You can request easily opened containers from the pharmacist*

Be sure to keep them out of reach of any children or grandchildren who might visit you.

7 *You can ask the pharmacist to type the label in large print so that you can read it easily.*



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8 *Do not share your medicine with a family member, friend or neighbor, and do not take medicines from them.*

What helps you could hurt someone else and vice versa.

9 *Ask your healthcare provider if there is a less expensive generic version of the medicine that is as effective*

Many generics are as good as the more expensive name brands and have had the same quality control applied to them by the government.

10 *Take old or expired medicines back to your pharmacist for safe disposal or in some places to the police station*

11 *Avoid combining alcohol and medications*

Of the 100 most often prescribed medicines, over half contain at least one substance that reacts badly with alcohol. Potential effects of mixing alcohol and medicines may range from drowsiness to liver damage, coma or even death.

12 *Use one pharmacy and get to know your pharmacist*

He or she can keep track of all your medicines and advise you if there is any conflict.

13 *Be extra careful if ordering medications online*

There are real risks associated with purchasing medications from online pharmacies. 97% of online pharmacies are not legal. Of the 40,000 active online pharmacies, a huge majority of them are fly by night start-ups that sell at a cut-rate price but deliver expired, contaminated and fake drugs that could harm you. You have no assurance of the safety, efficacy or quality of those products. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has recently launched a campaign to warn consumers that the vast majority of Internet pharmacies are fraudulent and likely are selling counterfeit drugs that could harm them.

If you have a question for Dr. Moira Fordyce, send email: moiraf@gmail.com.



Announcing Get Active Photo Contest

ActiveOver50 Media is pleased to announce its first annual Get Active Photo Contest to encourage boomers and seniors to stay active as long as possible. Prizes will be awarded for the most creative photographs showing “people over 50” engaged in a favorite exercise or sport.

Eligibility

The contest is open to amateurs only, regardless of age, sex or nationality. However, the subject in the photo must be at least 50. No entry fee is necessary to participate or win. The contest is void where prohibited by law, regulation, statute or other appropriate legal authority.

Entry Period

March 1, 2013 to June 1, 2013

Categories

Five categories, based on the age of the person photographed
Two entries maximum. Age groups:
50-60—60-70—70-80—80-90—90+

How to Enter

Take an original photo that reflects the theme of the contest: “Get Active.” Entries must be submitted via the Internet to **ActiveOver50.com/photocontest**. Complete the entry form and submit it together with your photo(s). Submissions to the photo contest must be received by June 1, 2013 in order to be eligible.



Prizes Include:

- Round trip coach tickets for two on Amtrak’s Coast Starlight from the Bay Area to Santa Barbara, CA. \$392.00 value.
- Yoga basket, \$150.00 gift certificate to Breathe LG and a two hour design consultation from Harrell Remodeling to design a room for relaxation, meditation and/or exercise. Total value: \$750.00.
- Durable Power of Attorney (\$450.00 value) and Advanced Healthcare Directive (\$450.00 value) from The Law Office of Derryl H. Molina.