

Safe Use of Medications — *It's Safe to Ask*

What is my health problem?	What do I need to do?		Why do I need to do this?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask questions if you do not understand the medical terms used. • Ask if there are any pictures or pamphlets to more clearly explain your health problem. • Ask how this health problem will affect your daily activities. • Ask where you may find more information on your health problem. • Ask how the medications will help. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask what medications you should be taking. • Ask why you are taking your medications. • Ask how and when to take your medications. • Ask what the side effects are of your medications. • Ask how to store your medications. • Keep an up to date list of all medications that you take. Include all prescriptions, over the counter medications, herbal medicine and vitamins. • Keep all medication in their original containers. • Know what your medications look like. • Do not share your medications with other people. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask - Do I need a “bubble pack” to keep track of my medications? • Store your medications in a dark, dry place at room temperature. • When a medication is no longer needed, take it back to the pharmacy so they can safely destroy it. • Keep all medications out of the reach of children. • If you take a medicine regularly, ask your pharmacist about refills. Make sure you go to the pharmacy to get more before you run out. • Try to go the same pharmacy for your medication needs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It's good for your health. Asking questions about your medications and keeping an up to date list of them will help you to know: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ What you are taking, ○ Why you are taking it, ○ When to take it, ○ How to take it.

When writing out your list of medications, ask yourself:

Allergies	Prescription Medications	Non-prescription Medications	Herbal Medicine & Supplements
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you have an allergy to or avoid any medications due to side effects? • What type of reaction do you have? • Contact your pharmacist or doctor for advice if you have a side effect to a medication. • You can report side effects to the Canada Vigilance program toll free at 1-866-234-2345, by fax at 1-866-678-6789 or on line www.healthcanada.gc.ca/arronline 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What prescription medications do you take? • How much? • How often? • Start date? Stop date? • Reason for taking? • Who prescribed? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What non-prescription over-the-counter medications do you take? • How much? • How often? • Start date? Stop date? • Reason for taking? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What herbal, natural or homeopathic remedies do you take? • What vitamins or minerals do you take? • How much? • How often? • Start date? Stop date? • Reason for taking?

My Specific Medication Questions	Health Care Providers' Answers