

MEDICATIONS

Using medications properly

- Understand your medication. Know what it's for, and how and when you're supposed to take it.
- Make an instruction sheet. Tape a sample of each pill you take on a sheet of paper and write down all the information about it as a reminder.
- Stick colored labels on your medicine bottles to simplify your routine. For example, blue can be for morning, red for afternoon and yellow for bedtime.
- Ask your pharmacist to help you create a coding system for your medications that makes them easier to take.
- Buy timer caps for pill bottles to remind you when to take medication.
- Many types of pill containers can be purchased – some even beep when it's time for you to take medication. Ask your pharmacist about these aids.
- If your medication routine is too complicated, ask your doctor or pharmacist to help you simplify the process.
- If your medications are too expensive, ask your doctor or pharmacist about finding financial assistance.
- If you're away from home a lot, make sure you carry enough of your medication with you to take the prescribed doses while you're out. Some pharmacists will prepare blister packs for daily or weekly medications.
- If you're using a commercial pill dispenser, set a regular time each week to refill it – for example every Friday night after you eat.
- If you have trouble understanding your doctor or pharmacist, ask a friend or loved one to go with you and help you.
- If you don't feel like your medication is making a difference, talk to your doctor and ask why.



Checklist for taking medication

When you take medications, it's important to carefully follow your healthcare professional's recommendations. If you don't, you could have problems. Without knowing it, you could counteract one medicine by taking it with another. Some medicines can make you feel sick or dizzy if they aren't taken properly. Here are some checklists to help you take your medicines properly.

How can I remember to take my medicine?

- Take it at the same time every day.
- Take it along with meals or other routine daily events, like brushing your teeth.
- Use special pillboxes that help you keep track, like the day-of-the-week divided ones you find at any drugstore.
- Ask people who are close to you to help remind you.
- Keep a "[medicine calendar](#)" near your medicine and make a note every time you take your dose.

Put a sticker or reminder note on your medicine cabinet or refrigerator. You can buy a small, magnetized white board with dry-erase markers and keep a list of your pills on the board. Each day, mark the board when you take your medication. It's an easy way to keep track, and at the end of the day, just erase the board and start over again in the morning.