

MANAGING YOUR MEDICATIONS
BY: Melissa Jeremiah, RN
Director of Hoosier Uplands Home Health and Hospice

Each year many Americans are hospitalized, or become ill, due to not taking their medications as ordered by their physician.

What are the most easily corrected medication mistakes?

1. Forgetting to take a medication.
2. Taking a medication different than the way your physician told you to.
3. Stopping a medicine before your physician tells you to.
4. Taking someone else's medication.

What should I report to my physician?

1. If you experience signs and symptoms of a possible reaction, such as an allergic reaction.
2. Any medications, prescription and over the counter, you are taking. Some medicines do not interact well with others.

What are tips to taking medications as directed?

1. Keep a chart of your medications and mark them off as you take them.
2. Don't put medications in another container unless it is a med prefill box.
3. Don't take medicine in the dark.
4. Keep a list of your medications, dosages and frequency with you at all times in the event of a hospital stay.
5. If you receive a medication from the pharmacy that doesn't look the same as usual, call the pharmacy and question it. It is mostly likely just a different brand, but you should double check anyway.

What can my pill bottle tell me?

1. If it is your medication.
2. If there are special instructions: Take with food and do not operate equipment, are a couple of examples.
3. How often you are to take a medication. Do not double up on a medication if you forget to take it when it was ordered, unless your physician has told you to.
4. The expiration date, throw away all expired medications.

How should I store my medications?

1. Keep medications out of direct sunlight.
2. Keep medications that require refrigeration refrigerated.
3. Avoid extreme heat/cold with medications.