

Directions for FACILITATORS

This activity is intended to demonstrate appropriate questions to ask a prescriber and then a pharmacist when receiving a new prescription.

Time to Complete the Activity:
10-15 minutes

Materials:

- 3 copies of the role play script
- 1 copy of "Directions for the Facilitators"
- 1-2 participant volunteers (optional)

Directions for the Facilitators:

- Consider starting by asking the audience if they have ever wished they had asked more questions of the prescriber when given a new prescription. Could also ask if they have ever talked to the pharmacist at the local pharmacy about a new prescription. Explain that this activity will give an example of how to go about getting good information from the doctor or pharmacist about a new prescription.
- Decide how the role play will work best with your audience as it could be done by 2 presenters, a presenter and a participant or even by 2 participants if desired
- Hand out the script to the 2 people doing the role play
- Review the Key Elements (given below) of the Physician/Patient Interaction the audience should listen for during the role play
- Perform the role play of the physician/patient
- Discuss the Key Elements with the audience and answer any questions

Key elements for the facilitator to point out and then review about the physician/patient interaction:

- Notice the patient will be asking the doctor questions to get more information about what was causing the symptoms and what the patient could do to get better, quickly.
- The patient also asks if the doctor felt there were any risks in taking the medication.
- Another very important question the patient asks the doctor was when to follow up with the doctor.

Key elements for the facilitator to point out and then review about the pharmacist/ patient interaction:

- The questions the patient asked the pharmacist will be mostly about the specific prescription the doctor had written.
- When to take the medicine
- With what to take the medicine
- Will it cause side effects
- Will it interact with my other medications
- Will it be covered on my insurance as a generic
- Are there any refills
- All of these questions are important to help safely take medications.



Physician/Patient

Scene: Mr. Smith has not been feeling well for the past few days. Today he visits his physician's office with a very sore throat, runny nose, dry cough, fever, poor appetite, and reports feeling weak and tired. After a physical examination, Dr. Jones begins to wrap-up the appointment.

Physician: Okay Mr. Smith, I think we can fix you up and get you back to feeling better. I'll write you a prescription and you'll be on your way!

Patient: One minute, Dr. Jones. I have a few questions I'd like to ask you.

Physician: By all means, ask away!

Patient: First, what do you think is making me sick?

Physician: Well, it looks to me like you have an upper respiratory infection. You've told me your symptoms started a few days back, and they all are signs of this type of infection. When I examined your throat, it looked very red, and I can see some secretions. This indicates an infection is present. I'm prescribing an antibiotic to treat the infection.

Patient: What do you think caused it?

Physician: It's hard to say. These infections are quite common and are easily spread from person to person.

Patient: How long will the symptoms last? I really want to get well so I can get back on the golf course.

Physician: You will be back on the greens in no time! With the help of antibiotics, you should be feeling better within a couple days. Some symptoms, especially your runny nose, may take longer to clear up. Remember; do not stop taking your antibiotics if your symptoms clear up before you have finished all of the medication. This is very important.

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Patient: Is there anything else I can do besides take the medicine to help me feel better?

Physician: There are lots of things you can do, actually. Make sure you wash your hands frequently and cover your mouth when coughing or sneezing, so that you do not spread your germs to others. Get plenty of rest, and try to rest your voice. Drink plenty of water to keep your throat moist, and cough drops, soup, or hot tea can be soothing as well. Lastly, an air humidifier might be helpful as well.

Patient: I know that the antibiotic will clear up my infection, but are there any risks in taking it?

Physician: The only risk would be if you had previously had an allergic reaction to a similar type of medication. This could put you at risk for being allergic to the antibiotic I am prescribing. Since you have never had any allergic reactions to this type of medication before, I do not anticipate any problems. It would be more risky if we didn't treat the infection and it got worse or spread to other parts of your body. That is an important question to ask, and I'm glad you did.

Patient: Should I schedule a follow-up appointment with you?

Physician: If you are not starting to feel better within two days, call back and schedule another appointment. Otherwise, I feel comfortable waiting until our next scheduled visit.

Patient: I appreciate you taking the time to answer all my questions.

Pharmacist/Patient

Scene: Mr. Smith leaves his physician's office and heads to his local pharmacy to get the prescription filled. When the clerk calls his name, he states he has a few questions for the pharmacist.

Pharmacist: Hello, Mr. Smith, good to see you! I am Dr. Johnson, the pharmacist on duty, today. How can I help you?

Patient: I just came from an appointment with Dr. Jones, and I have a few questions I'd like to ask about my prescription.

Pharmacist: Sure, no problem. The doctor gave you an antibiotic; he wants you to take one capsule twice a day for 10 days.

Patient: When do I take the medicine? Should I take it with food?

Pharmacist: Well, I would recommend taking this medicine first thing in the morning and then about 12 hours later with milk, juice, or food, which makes it gentler on your stomach. If you forget a dose, take it as soon as you remember. Be sure to take all of the medication until it is completely gone, even if you are feeling better.

Patient: Am I likely to have any bad effects from this drug?

Pharmacist: Most people have very little problem taking this medication, but you may get an upset stomach, especially if you take the medication without food. Be sure to report any signs of an allergic reaction, like difficulty breathing, appearance of a rash, or itching, to Dr. Jones immediately.

Patient: Is it okay to use this medication with other medicines I am taking?

Pharmacist: Your pharmacist will always look for any potential drug interactions with your prescription medications, and I did not find any today when I reviewed your profile. I also double checked your medication allergies to see if you were likely to have an allergic reaction, and you are not. You should add this prescription to your medication list for now, so that if you visit any of your other doctors, they will be aware you are taking it. Also, this medication does not interact with any non-prescription medications, vitamins, or herbal supplements, but it is always a great idea to ask.

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Patient: My Prescription Drug Plan prefers I get generic medications when possible. Is this a generic?

Pharmacist: You are receiving a generic medication today. It will work just as well as the name-brand product but will cost you less.

Patient: One last question: does this prescription have any refills?

Pharmacist: Dr. Jones did not put any refills on the prescription. If you are not feeling better after taking all of the medication, you will need to make another appointment because another antibiotic may be necessary to treat the infection. If you become ill in the future with similar symptoms, you will still need to be seen by Dr. Jones to determine appropriate treatment. As I said before, finish this entire antibiotic as directed, even if your symptoms go away.

Patient: Great! I think those are all the questions I had for you about my prescription. Thanks for your help.

Pharmacist: No problem, Mr. Smith. Please feel free to call me if you think of anything else.