SAFE MEDICATION PRACTICES FOR BETTER HEALTH

GenerationRx
Safe medication practices for life.

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Brought to you by:

The Ohio State University
College of Pharmacy

CardinalHealth Foundation

Be Your Own Advocate
Learn Safe Medication Practices
Know the Risks of Medication Misuse
Be Your Own **Health Advocate**

**You are the most important member of your healthcare team.** Take the time to become an expert about your medications:

- Learn about your medications - especially the reasons for taking them and what side effects could occur. Use your pharmacist as a trusted resource.

- Keep a complete medication record – this is simply a list of ALL medications you are taking, including those that do not require a prescription.

- If the cost of your prescription is an issue, be sure to talk to your healthcare provider or pharmacist.

- Anything you take can impact your medication therapy. Share everything you are taking with your doctor and pharmacist.

- Having a new symptom or health issue? Consider if it could be due to a change in your medications.
Follow Safe Medication Practices

1. Only use prescription medications as directed by a health professional. Make any changes in your medication therapy only after talking with your doctor or pharmacist.

2. Do not share or take someone else’s medication, as individuals can respond to the same medication differently.

3. Keep your medications safe:
   - Store medications in secure locations such as lockboxes, medication safes, or other lockable spaces.
   - Avoid storage places that children or others can easily access, such as drawers, nightstands, or kitchen counters/cabinets.
   - Recall that most people who misuse prescription drugs get them from family members or friends.
   - Dispose of medication properly (see next page).

4. Model safe medication practices.
   Be a good example to those around you by modeling these safe medication-taking practices. What others see you do matters.

Know the Risks of Medication Misuse

Prescription Drug misuse is:

- Taking more of a prescription medication than prescribed.
- Taking a prescription medication for a reason different than prescribed.
- Sharing or taking someone else’s prescription medication.

Learn more at GenerationRx.org
Safe Medication Disposal

Option 1
Place in drug dropbox (visit rxdrugdropbox.org).

Option 2
Take advantage of drug take-back events.

Option 3
Safely dispose in the trash:

Step 1
Mix leftover pills with unwanted substances like cat litter or coffee grounds.

Step 2
Throw away the sealed mixture into the trash.

Step 3
Remove the prescription label and dispose of the empty bottle.

Questions You Can Ask Your Pharmacist

• What is this medication supposed to do?
• What is the best time of day to take the medication?
• Is it safe to crush or split the medication?
• Should I take it with or without food?
• What side effects most commonly occur?
• What should I do if I forget to take a dose?
• Are there other options that are less expensive?
• Is there a generic product available for my brand-name drug?
• Is there a manufacturer’s program that can help me afford my specific medicine?
• Is there a clinic in my area that can help me with my healthcare and/or obtaining medications if I cannot afford them?