



Health Information and Education Center Medical Prescription Tips

Here are some practical tips to ask once a decision is made to prescribe a medication:

♥ Clarify the dose prescribed, the number of times medication is to be taken daily, the name of the medication in case there is confusion on the part of the pharmacist or physician.

♥ If your provider is prescribing a 3-4 times a day medication ask if there is another prescription that is equally effective but given only once or twice a day. This will help reduce the chances of forgetting to give the medication.

♥ Indicate what type of medication is best for your child such as if they cannot swallow pills and need the medication in a liquid form.

♥ The pharmacist will give you a print out of the medications side effects. Ask the doctor if there are any common or frequent side effects that you should keep look for. Some medication require that you stay out of the sun or avoid dairy products.

♥ Ask the pharmacist if there are special instructions for taking a prescription: avoiding dairy one hour after taking, take at bedtime in the event the medication causes drowsiness, taking with food or before eating.

♥ Ask if you should be taking something else with the medication. One example is when taking prednisone you should take calcium.

♥ Don't be afraid to ask the doctor for samples especially if it is a medication that you will be using for a short period of time or if you are using it as a trial.

♥ Do not change the form of any medication without speaking to your pharmacist. Do not crush, chop, mix with juice unless it is okay to do so. Always ask before altering a medication's form. Sustained release

pills should not be crushed and some capsules should not be opened.

Check with your pharmacist.

♥ If a medication tastes awful or if your child has many medications see about purchasing capsules and putting the medication into it so that your child won't have to taste them or swallow as many.

Instead of leaving numerous prescription bottles on the counter of your kitchen designate a shelf in a cabinet. If there are a lot of prescription bottles, consider purchasing a three level spice rack.

Color code bottles for each family member to make them easy to find.

On your calendar write down the date to call a prescription and the prescription number so that you don't forget to renew it. This is critical with the 90 day mail away prescription since you have to wait to receive it. Some pharmacies have a monthly renewal reminder system. Ask your pharmacy if they can and will automatically renew prescriptions that are ongoing.

If you have difficulty with a pharmacy, request to have your insurance carrier intervene (if they are overseeing your prescription coverage)

If your child is young and you are getting a medication in liquid form ask the doctor for extra to allow for spillage in case your child spits it out!

Learn the generic and brand names and doses of medications your child is taking. This can help avoid prescription mistakes.

Ask if a brand name medication comes in a generic form, this may help you save on cost.

If a refill looks different than a previous supply, confirm with the pharmacist that the medication is correct.

Don't be afraid to ask questions. This will help to avoid mistakes that could cause injury.

Modified from NYS Family to Family Health Care Information and Education Center

To contact FVND call 888-522-9654, www.geocities.com/ndfv/ or write PO Box 163 Edgeley, ND 58433

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