



HEALTH WORLD
PHARMACEUTICALS

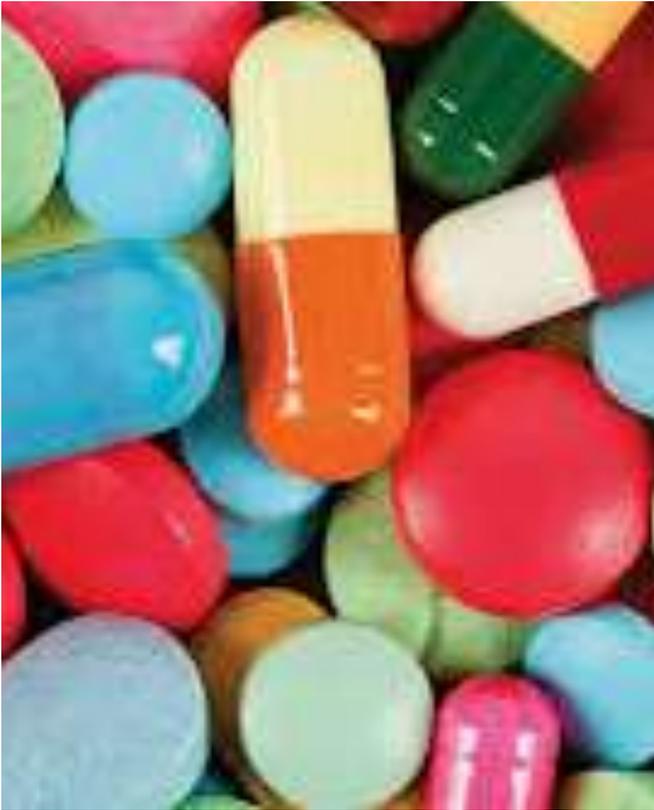
Medicines & Safe Use of Medicines

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What are Medicines



What are Medicines



▶ Introduction

- ▶ Medicine: a drug or preparation for the treatment or prevention of disease/illness.
- ▶ Medicines help us live longer and healthier.
- ▶ However, not taking them properly or mixing certain drugs can cause unwanted/adverse reactions.
- ▶ You need to be careful to keep track of your medicines and use them safely.

▶ Medicines

- ▶ **Prescriptions.** What you can get only with a doctor's order
- ▶ **Over-the-counter pills, liquids, or creams.** What you buy without a prescription
- ▶ **Complementary Medicines, Vitamins, or dietary supplements.**

What you need to know about Medicines

New Medication: Talk with your doctor, nurse, or other healthcare provider before starting a new medicine.

Allergies and Side Effects: Go over your allergies and any problems you have had with other medicines, such as rashes, trouble breathing, indigestion, dizziness, or mood changes.

Changing or Stopping Medication: You will also want to find out whether you'll need to change or stop taking any of your prescription medication(s) or over-the-counter drugs while using this new medicine.

Medication Interactions: Mixing some medication can cause unpleasant and sometimes serious problems.

For instance, it is dangerous to use aspirin when taking a blood-thinning medicine.

Medication Records: When starting a new medication, make sure to write down the name of the drug and why it's being prescribed for you.

Also, make note of any special instructions for how to take the medicine.

Medication Labels: Follow the label instructions of your medication.

Consumer Medicine Information (CMI) Leaflet: Medication instructions tell you exactly what the medication is designed to treat, how and when you should take it, where to store it and what side effects have been reported.

They also advise of any contraindications (situations when a medication, procedure or surgery should not be used because it may be harmful to you).

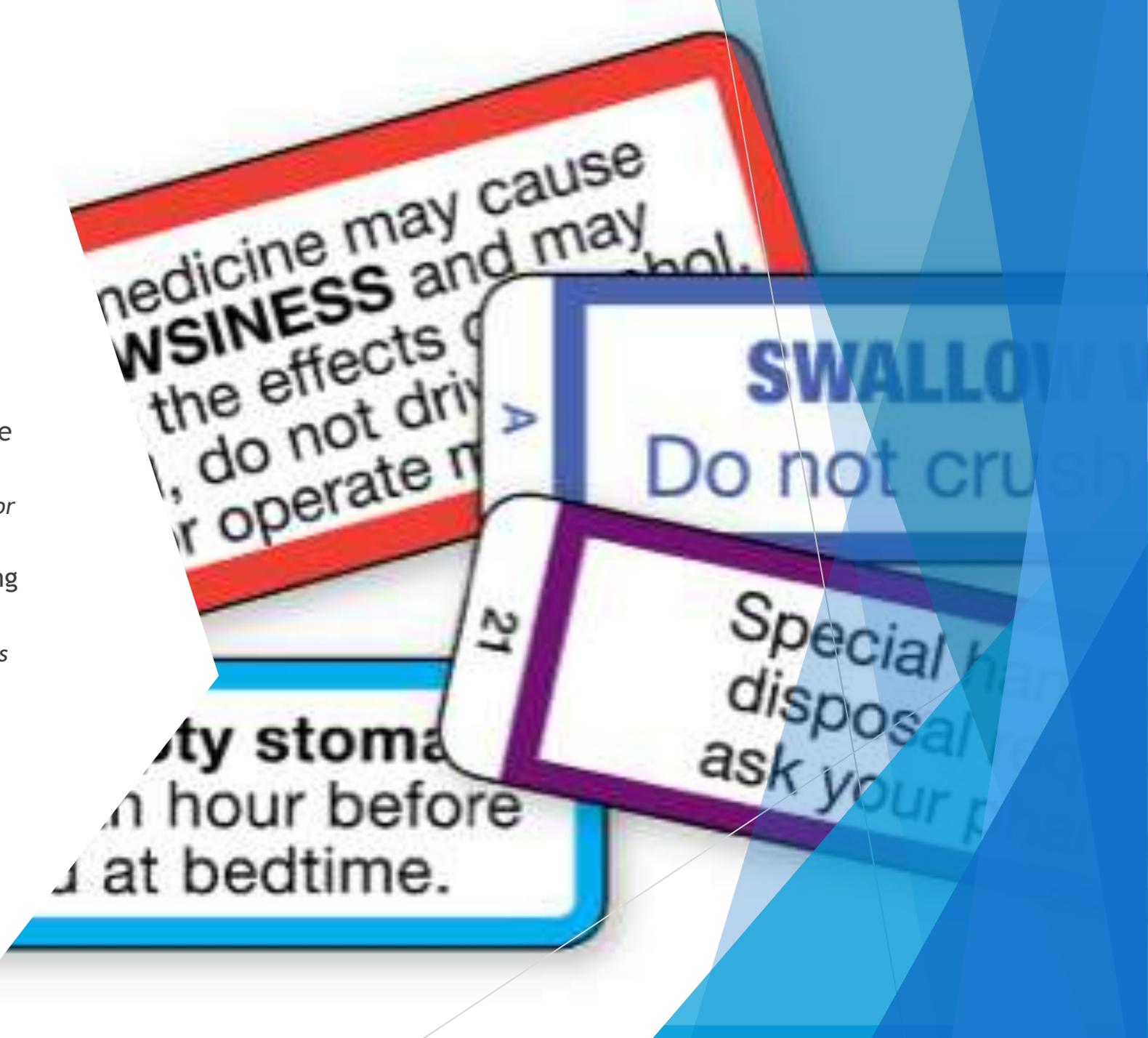
How can a Pharmacist Help?

- ▶ A pharmacist can answer many of your questions about prescriptions and over-the-counter drugs.
- ▶ Try to have all your prescriptions filled at the same pharmacy (records are in one place).
 - ▶ This will help alert the pharmacist if a new drug might cause a problem with something else you are taking (drug interactions/adverse effects).
- ▶ If you're not able to use just one pharmacy, show the pharmacist at each pharmacy your list of medicines (including OTC meds and complementary meds).
- ▶ When you have a prescription filled:
 - ▶ Tell the pharmacist if you have trouble swallowing pills.
 - ▶ There may be liquid medicine available as an alternative.
 - ▶ Do not chew, break, or crush tablets without first finding out if the drug will still work.
- ▶ Make sure you can read and understand the name of the medicine as well as the directions for use and meaning of the labels on the container.



How can a Pharmacist Help?

- ▶ Check that you can open the container.
 - ▶ *If not, ask the pharmacist to put your medicines in bottles that are easier to open.*
- ▶ Ask about special instructions on where to store a medicine.
 - ▶ *For example, should it be kept in the refrigerator or in a dry place?*
- ▶ Check the label on your medicine before leaving the pharmacy.
 - ▶ *It should have your name on it and the directions given by your doctor.*
 - ▶ *If it doesn't, don't take it, and talk with the pharmacist.*
- ▶ Make sure your doctor and pharmacist have an up-to-date list of your allergies.
 - ▶ *So they don't give you a medicine that contains something you are allergic to.*



Side Effects And Where To Get Help

- **Side Effects (SE):** Unwanted or unexpected symptoms or feelings that occur when you take medicine are called side effects.
 - *SE can be relatively minor, such as a headache, minor stomach discomfort or a dry mouth.*
 - *They can also be life-threatening, such as severe bleeding or irreversible damage to the liver or kidneys.*
- If you experience side effects, write them down so you can report them to your doctor accurately.
- Call your doctor (Dr) right away if you have any problems with your medicines or if you are worried that the medicine might be doing more harm than good.
 - *Your Dr may be able to change your medication to another that will work just as well.*

SIDE EFFECTS





Side Effects And Where To Get Help

- If you have a severe reaction to any medication, seek medical help immediately.
 - If you experience mild side effects that your doctor or pharmacist have not warned you about, do not stop the medication before speaking with your doctor.
 - It may simply be a case of adjusting the type or dosage, or there may be something else causing the symptoms.
 - If you are particularly concerned and cannot reach your doctor, call the NPS Medicines Line on 1300 633 424 or the Adverse Medicines Events Line on 1300 134 237 for advice.

Where to get help

- Your doctor
- Pharmacist
- NPS Medicines Line call 1300 633 424
- Adverse Medicines Events Line call 1300 134 237

Generic and Brand Names

- ▶ Generics and brand-name medicines act the same way in the body.
 - ▶ They contain the same active ingredients.
 - ▶ A generic drug should be just as safe as a brand-name drug.
 - ▶ They should both be of equal strength and quality.
 - ▶ You take a generic drug the same way as a brand-name drug.
- ▶ Make sure when taking your medication to not double dose on a generic and branded medicine.

GENERIC VS BRAND NAME DRUGS

Brand-Name vs Generic Drugs

No Difference	Active Ingredient	No Difference
Higher in Cost	Price	Lower in Cost
Covered if no Generic Form Exists	Insurance Coverage	Normally Always Covered
Tested and Approved by the FDA	Inactive Ingredients	May Differ - But Proven to be Acceptable by the FDA
No Difference	Strength/Dosage	No Difference
Drugs are Standard in Size, Color, Packaging, etc.	Appearance/Look	Packaging and the Drug Itself may Look Different

Keeping Track of Your Medicines

Make a list

Write down all medicines you take, including over-the-counter drugs and dietary supplements. The list should include the name of each medicine, amount you take, and time(s) you take it. If it's a prescription, also note the doctor who prescribed it and reason it was prescribed. Show the list of all to your healthcare providers, including physical therapists and dentists.



Check expiration dates on bottles

If a medicine is past its expiration date, you may be able to dispose of it at your pharmacy, or, check with your doctor about how to safely discard it. Your doctor can also tell you if you will need a refill.



Keep medicines out of reach of young children

Avoid taking medicines in front of them, as they might try to copy you. If your medicines are kept in bottles without child safety caps because they are hard to open, be extra careful where you store them.

Medicines and Travelling

- ▶ Before you travel, ask your doctor or pharmacist how to adjust your medicine schedule to account for changes in time zones, routine, and diet.
- ▶ Bring the phone numbers of your doctors and pharmacists with you.
- ▶ Carry a list of all the medications you take with you.
- ▶ When flying, carry your medicines with you; do not pack them in your checked luggage.
- ▶ Take enough medication with you in case you need to stay longer.
- ▶ When traveling, always keep medicines out of heat and direct sunlight.
- ▶ Make sure you visit your Dr before your flight.
- ▶ Make sure your immunisation is up to date.
- ▶ Let your Dr and pharmacist know where you are travelling eg Malaria prone countries



A collage of medical supplies including pills, capsules, a syringe, and a map. The image shows several blue and yellow capsules, a syringe with an orange plunger, and white round pills scattered on a map of the United States. The map shows states like Colorado, Kansas, and Oklahoma. The background is a blue geometric pattern.

Taking Medicines Safely

- ▶ **Follow the medication instructions.** Read all medicine labels. Make sure to take your medicines the right way. For example, don't use an over-the-counter cough and cold syrup if you only have a runny nose and no cough.
- ▶ **Use the right amount.** Don't take a larger dose of a medicine thinking it will help you more. It can be very dangerous, even deadly. And, don't skip or take half doses of a prescription drug.
- ▶ **Take medicine on time.** Some people use meals or bedtime as reminders to take their medicine. Other people use charts, calendars, or weekly pill boxes. You can also set timers and write reminders to take your medication.
- ▶ **Turn on a light.** Don't take medicine in the dark; otherwise, you might make a mistake.
- ▶ **Report problems.** Call your doctor right away if you have any trouble with your prescription or over-the-counter medicine, or if you are worried that it might be doing more harm than good. There may be something else you can take.
- ▶ **Tell your doctor about alcohol, tobacco, and drug use.** Alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs can affect how well your medicines work. Be honest with your doctor about how much you use.

Taking Medicines Safely

- ▶ **Check before stopping.** Take prescription medicine until it's finished or until your doctor says you may stop the medication.
 - ▶ Note that some medicines are supposed to be taken “as required” only.
- ▶ **Don't share.** Do not take medicines prescribed for another person or give yours to someone else.
- ▶ **Expired Medication.** Do not take medicines which are out of date.
 - ▶ Throw out unwanted and out-of-date medication, as the active ingredient may no longer be effective.
 - ▶ You can also return it to your pharmacy for safe disposal.
- ▶ **Taking Multiple Medication:** talk to your pharmacist about dosage administration aids.
 - ▶ Dosette/Pill box/Webster Paks may be useful to administer your medication.



Safe Storage and Disposal of Medicines

- ▶ Some medication can deteriorate if it is stored in an area that is exposed to sunlight, too hot or has too much moisture (such as a bathroom).
- ▶ Some medication (for example, some probiotics and eye drops) needs to be stored in the fridge.
- ▶ Ask your pharmacist about any special storage instructions.
- ▶ Regularly check the use-by dates on your medication (including prescription, non-prescription and complementary medicines) and throw out any that have expired.



Safe Disposal of Medicines

- ▶ *Getting rid of unwanted or out-of-date medicines properly is important.*
- ▶ *It has been estimated that more than 500 tonnes of medicines find their way into waterways and landfill every year after Australians dispose of them irresponsibly.*
- ▶ Unwanted or expired medicines may be returned to the community pharmacy for safe disposal (RUM bin).
- ▶ Sharp items may be discarded in a sharps container and returned to the pharmacy for safe disposal.





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Questions?

Thank you!!

FAHWA (Filipino Australian Health Workers
Association Inc.)

Website: <https://www.fahwa.com.au/>