



Stay On Your Feet...

Step 6: Manage Your Medications

Medications can help older adults improve or maintain their health. These can include prescription, over-the-counter, vitamins, supplements, herbal or topical creams. As you get older, the way medication affects you will change.

Some medication may increase your risk for a fall. Here are a few tips for managing your medication, which will help you maintain your independence and prevent a fall.

Know your medications

- Know the names of your medications and what each is for.
- Keep an up-to-date list of all your medications, including prescriptions, over-the-counter medication, vitamins, herbal remedies, etc.
- Review all your medications every 6 to 12 months with your health care provider, specialist or pharmacist. Include all prescriptions, over-the-counter medications, vitamins and herbal remedies.

Take as directed

- Take medication as directed. Talk to your health care provider or pharmacist before stopping any medication.
- Consider using a dosette or a blister pack to separate your medications into the times and days you need to use them.
- Talk to your health care provider or pharmacist before adding new medications, vitamins or supplements to your routine.
- Do not share your medications with others.
- Store medications in a dry place, not in the bathroom or over the stove.
- Only store medications in the fridge if directed.
- Store medications in a location that is not accessible to others.

Interactions

- Monitor how you feel after taking medications. Everyone is different and may have different side effects.
- Use one pharmacy. It is easier to keep track of medications and any potential interactions if you use the same pharmacy.
- Ask your pharmacist if you should avoid taking your medication with certain foods or beverages.
- Do not mix alcohol and medications. Alcohol can make medications less effective or toxic. Taking medications with alcohol can increase your risk of heart problems, internal bleeding, difficulty breathing, drowsiness or decreased coordination.

What to ask your health care provider

- What is the name of the medication?
- Why do I need to take this?
- What are the possible side effects?
- Will I need a refill?

What to ask your pharmacist

- How do I take this medication?
- When is the best time to take this medication?
- What should I do if I miss a dose?
- Where can I store this medication?
- Can I drive a car while taking this medication?
- Can I get my medication reviewed?
- Does this interact with any of my other medications?

Contact your local pharmacy or municipality on how to safely dispose of your unused, un-labelled or expired medications. Do not throw them in the garbage or flush them down the toilet.

How am I managing my medications?

Review how you are managing your medication and complete the table below. An example is given to help.

What positive steps am I already taking?	What changes might help me stay on my feet?	How will I make these changes? Is there anyone I need to contact?	When will I make these changes?
<p>I keep all of my medications in the same cupboard.</p> <p>I safely dispose of all medication once they reach their expiry date.</p>	<p>I will review my medications with my health care provider.</p>	<p>I will make an appointment with my pharmacist to review my medications.</p>	<p>I will talk to my pharmacist when I go in on Monday to dispose of my old medications.</p>

Who else do you know who would benefit from this information?

Stay Active, Stay Independent and Stay On Your Feet!

For more information about risk factors for falls or local falls prevention programs, contact: **Stay On Your Feet Sudbury Manitoulin**

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