



Be An Active Member Of Your Health Care Team



To make medicine use

S-A-F-E-R

Speak up

Ask questions

Find the facts

Evaluate your choices

Read the label and follow directions

Speak Up



The members of your team need to know:

- your medical history
 - illnesses
 - medical conditions
 - operations

Speak Up



The members of your team need to know:

- all your medicines, including
 - prescription medicine
 - sample medicine
 - over-the-counter medicine

Speak Up



The members of your team need to know:

- about
 - dietary supplements you use
 - other treatments you use
 - allergies
 - anything that could affect medicine use



Ask Questions

- You have to ask the right questions.
- Write your questions down.
- Take notes on the answers.
- Bring along a friend or relative.



Find the Facts

- brand and generic (chemical) names
- active ingredients
- inactive ingredients
- uses



Find the Facts

- warnings
- possible interactions
- side effects
- tolerance, dependence, or addiction



Find the Facts

- overdose
- directions
- storage instructions
- expiration



Evaluate your choices

- think about helpful and unwanted effects
- decide what is most important
- get expert advice from the team



Read the label and follow directions

Read the label:

- each time you buy an OTC or fill a prescription
 - check for the active ingredient(s)
 - is it the right medicine for you?

Drug Facts

Active ingredient(s)

Purpose

Uses

-
-

Warnings

Do not use

Ask a doctor before use if you have

-
-

Ask a doctor or pharmacist before use if you are

-
-

When using this product

-
-

Stop use and ask a doctor if

-
-

If pregnant or breastfeeding,

Keep out of reach of children. In case of accidental ingestion, get medical help or contact a Poison Control Center immediately.

Directions

-
-
-
-

Other information

-
-

Inactive ingredients

Questions?



Read the label and follow directions

If you have bought the medicine before,
is it the:

- same shape?
- same color?
- same size?
- same packaging?



Read the label and follow directions

Read the label:

- before you leave the pharmacy
 - Do you have the right medicine?
 - Do you know the right dose?
 - Do you know how to use it?



Read the label and follow directions

Read the label:

- each time, before use. Is it right 5 ways?
 - right medicine
 - right patient
 - right amount
 - right time
 - right way



Read the label and follow directions

Follow the directions

- on the label
- from your health care team
- to get the most benefit
- to lower the risks



Read the label and follow directions

- Want to stop taking the medicine?
- Want to use it in a different way?

Follow the directions until you talk to a member of the team.



Report back to the health care team

Pay attention to how you feel.
If you have an unwanted effect...

Tell a member of your health care team right away.



“Consumer Education: What You Need to Know to Use Medicine Safely”

www.fda.gov/usemedicinesafely

(888) INFO-FDA fda.gov/cder

Question Guide

- What are the brand and generic (non-brand) names of the medicine?
- What is the active ingredient?
- Could I use a generic form?
- What is the medicine for, and what will it do for me?
- Will this medicine take the place of any other medicine I have been using?

Question Guide

- When should I start to feel better or notice a difference in how I feel?
- When should I report back to the team?
- Can this medicine be used safely with the other medicines and treatments I already use? Does this include prescription and OTC medicines, vitamins, herbals, or other supplements, and other treatments?

Question Guide

- Should I avoid any drinks, foods, other substances, or activities while using this medicine?
- Should I avoid starting other medicines (prescription or OTC), dietary supplements (like herbals and vitamins) or other treatments while I am using this medicine?
- What are the possible side effects from this medicine? What do I do if I get a side effect?

Question Guide

- Is there any chance that I could become tolerant, dependent, or addicted to this medicine? What can I do to avoid this?
- How and when should I use the medicine, in what amount, and for how long? Are there any special directions for using this medicine?
- Will I need any tests (blood tests, x-rays, other tests) to make sure the medicine is working as it should? How will I get the results?

Question Guide

- What should I do if I miss a dose? What should I do if I use too much by mistake?
- How and where should I keep this medicine?
(Remember: Always put medicines out of the sight and reach of children and pets.)
- Where and how can I get more information about this medicine?