

Older adults are prescribed medication more frequently than others to help manage chronic illnesses. Here is some important information to help manage medications.

Medications and Aging

Changes in an aging body may affect how medications are absorbed by the body. Some people experience more adverse effects than others. In addition, while we age, how and when medicine is taken may also be impacted by the older adult's vision, hearing, memory, dexterity and ability to swallow. These affects can impact your daily functioning and quality of life. Some symptoms of a possible medication related problem may be:

- excessive drowsiness
- confusion
- depression
- delirium
- insomnia
- incontinence or constipation
- muscle weakness
- loss of appetite
- falls or fractures
- changes in speech and memory
- Parkinson's-like symptoms



Questions to Ask your Pharmacist About Medications

Your pharmacist is dedicated to ensuring you understand how your medication works. The questions below may help you with those discussions:

- Why is this medicine prescribed? How does it work?
- How and when will we know it's working?
- How long should I take the medicine?
- Will this medicine interact with other medications?
- Should it be taken with food?
- Are there any activities that I should avoid?
- Can it be chewed, crushed, dissolved, or mixed with other medicines?
- What are some possible problems that I might experience?
- How can it be prevented? What should we do if a problem occurs?
- What should we do if I miss a dose or took too much?

(over)

- Does the pharmacy provide special services such as home delivery or comprehensive medication review and counseling?

Too Many Medications

Many older adults use multiple medications because they are needed for many common conditions. Ask your pharmacist or family physician if all the medications are safe and necessary and let them know if there are any concerns.