

For more information about  
programs and services for seniors  
in Ontario call:

## More Suggestions

1-888-910-1999  
(TTY 1-800-387-5559)

# Safe Medication Use for Seniors

- Tell your doctor and pharmacist immediately if you experience new or unexpected side effects from any medication.
- Store medication in a cool dry place, away from direct sunlight unless otherwise directed.
- Keep medication out of reach of children.
- Do not transfer or mix medication into other containers. If you wish to use a pill organizer, please ask your pharmacist for advice.
- If you have difficulty opening the safety cap of your medication bottle, ask your pharmacist for an easy off or flip top lid.
- If you don't know if a medication is still good, check with your pharmacist.
- Do not put medication in the garbage or down the toilet or sink. Check with your pharmacy to see if they have a medication disposal program.
- Ask questions – your health is nothing to guess about. Your pharmacist and doctor are there to assist you!
- Know how and when to take your medication.
- Tell your doctor and pharmacist about any side effects from your medication.
- Store your medication in a cool, dry place out of reach of children.
- Do not share your medication.
- Do not transfer or mix your medication into other containers.
- Ask questions – talk to your doctor and pharmacist.



[www.opatoday.com](http://www.opatoday.com)



[www.ontario.ca/seniors](http://www.ontario.ca/seniors)





## *Did you know?*

- Medication is more than just the drugs your doctor prescribes. It includes over-the-counter products, vitamins and minerals, herbal and natural health products.
- Medication must never be shared. What helps you may seriously hurt someone else.
- Your medication records are kept confidential and are not shared among pharmacies. To have a complete medication record, you should have your prescriptions filled at the same pharmacy every time.
- Up to 50% of all medication is taken incorrectly. You should know what your medication is for, and how to take it.
- Problems with medication account for 1 in 7 emergency admissions of persons over the age of 65 years.

- Some foods, drinks and over-the-counter products can interact with your prescription medication and could cause serious harm to your health. This includes alcohol, vitamins and minerals, herbal and natural health products.
- The same medication may have a different shape, colour or size and can have more than one name. Most of us know them by brand names but they also have a generic or chemical name.
- Herbal and natural health products can have strong effects on the body. They are not the same as prescription medication. Do not replace or change your present medication without consulting your doctor or pharmacist.

*Version française disponible*

## *Some Suggestions*

- Keep an up-to-date record of your prescription medication and non-prescription products, allergies, illnesses, and other health information.
- Use your medication as directed. Do not stop or change your medication without asking your pharmacist or doctor.
- If you miss a dose, ask your pharmacist or doctor what to do.
- Be sure you know the name and purpose of each medication you are taking. If you're not sure, ask your pharmacist.
- Know how and when to take medication. Medication affects each person differently.
- Unless otherwise instructed, finish any antibiotic prescription you receive – don't stop when your symptoms first improve.
- Whenever possible, use the same pharmacy every time. Your pharmacist keeps a thorough and up-to-date record of all the medication you are taking.