

Remember

- Ask questions.
- Learn about your medicines and keep the information sheets.
- Never give your medicines to anyone else.
- Tell your doctor or nurse about any herbal/natural health products or alternative therapies you take because these may affect your medicines.
- Keep medicines safe – out of reach of children and grandchildren.
- Return unused medicines to the pharmacy.



The Health Quality & Safety Commission values your suggestions and comments.

For further information or to give feedback, you can:

- visit our website www.hqsc.govt.nz
- email info@hqsc.govt.nz
- send a letter to PO Box 25496, Wellington 6146.



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Taking your medicine safely



What can you do about medicine safety?

When collecting medicines

- Try to use the same pharmacy every time.
- Ask the pharmacist to explain what's on the medicine label.
- If your medicine looks different from usual, ask your pharmacist why.

When taking medicines

- Before taking the first dose - be sure you know how to take the medicine and be alert for side effects.
- Take your medicines as directed - the right medicine, the right amount, at the right time.
- Write any side effects down and tell your doctor or nurse about them.
- Have an up-to-date list of your medicines and when you take them (your 'medication card' or 'yellow card') and keep it updated.
- Keep track of your medicines - have them in a daily or weekly container, or your pharmacy might provide them in blister packs.

Before your appointment

- Write down any questions you want to ask about your medicines.
- Ask whether you need blood tests to check how your medicines are working.



At your appointment

- Take notes.
- Take a friend or family member with you.
- Take your list of medicines or take a bag with ALL your medicines (including herbal and shop purchased medicines) to any appointment with your doctor, nurse, pharmacist, dentist or other health professional.
- Remind your doctor about any allergies you have.
- Make sure you know why you have any new medicine, when to take it and the amount to take.
- Ask about side effects and what to avoid while taking the medicine.

'You are in charge of your medicines. Do not be afraid to ask questions about them.'

**Medicines are powerful
so it is very important you
take them correctly:**

**right medicine,
right amount,
right time.**

