

# Preventing Medication Errors

## “Talk About Prescriptions”™

### What *You* Need to Know ■ What *You* Need to Do

#### At Home

**KEEP** an updated list of the prescription and nonprescription medicines & other products such as vitamins and minerals, you are taking.

**TAKE** your medicine list with you every time you visit a healthcare professional and have him or her review it.



#### At the Doctor's Office

**HAVE** the doctor, physician assistant or nurse practitioner write down the name of the medicine (brand & generic, if available), what it is for, its dosage, and how often to take it, or provide other written material with this information.

**HAVE** the prescriber explain how to use the medicine properly.

#### At the Pharmacy

**Know** that you can review your list of medications with the pharmacist for additional safety.

**Know** that you have the right to counseling by the pharmacist if you have any questions. For example, you can ask the pharmacist to explain how to properly take the medicine, the side effects of the medicine, and what to do if you think you are starting to develop a side effect.



#### At the Hospital

**Ask** the doctor or nurse what medicines you are being given.

**Do not** take a medicine without being told the purpose for doing so.

**Exercise** your right to have someone with you whenever you are being given medicine and are not able to carefully follow the medication-use process yourself.

**Before surgery**, ask whether there are medications, especially prescription antibiotics, that you should take or any that you should stop taking.

**Before you go home**, ask for a list of the medications that you should be taking at home, have a healthcare professional review the medicines with you, and be sure you understand how to take these medicines.

EDUCATE *before*  
YOU MEDICATE

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Not sure about what you need to know and do when it comes to taking your medicine? Follow this important rule: **When in doubt, ask first!**

Your healthcare professional can help you get the facts you need to use your medicines safely.

[www.talkaboutrx.org](http://www.talkaboutrx.org)