

Medication Management

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Today we will discuss

- Polypharmacy
- Steps you can take to manage your own medications or medications for a loved one
- How to discuss medications with your doctor



Polypharmacy

- Term used when you are taking 4 or more medications
- Prescription medications
- Over-the-counter medications



Risks of Polypharmacy

- Increases the risk of:
 - Side effects
 - Drug interactions
 - Hospitalizations
 - Falls



Medication Management

- System to support an individual's ability to:
 - Understand, organize, take, and monitor medication(s)
- Can involve:
 - Family members
 - Adherence aids
 - Routines
- How do you remember to take your medications?



Where to begin

- Medication List
- A thorough list is best
 - Drug name & strength, dose, route, frequency, reason for use
 - For example:
 - Tylenol daily
 - Instead, the following would be better:
 - Tylenol 500mg:
1 tablet by mouth once daily as needed for arthritis
(Dr. Smith)

Where to begin



- Medication List
 - Make a list yourself
 - Request a current list from your doctor or pharmacist
 - Make sure the list is current before bringing it to any doctor appointment
 - Bring your bottles from home to an appointment to make sure your medication list is up to date

Medication Log – Example

Medication log sheet

Name of Medication	Dose	When to take:				With or without food?	What is the medication for?	Date started/ date stopped/ date dose changed.	Doctor who started the med.	Side Effects
		A.M.	Noon	P.M.	Bedtime					
		A.M.	Noon	P.M.	Bedtime					
		A.M.	Noon	P.M.	Bedtime					
		A.M.	Noon	P.M.	Bedtime					
		A.M.	Noon	P.M.	Bedtime					
		A.M.	Noon	P.M.	Bedtime					
		A.M.	Noon	P.M.	Bedtime					



Where to begin

- Schedule an appointment to discuss your medications with your doctor
- At this visit you can discuss:
 - Combination products
 - Non-drug strategies
 - Challenges you are facing with your medication



Steps You Can Take

- Talk to your provider about deprescribing



Deprescribing

- Term used to describe when healthcare professionals work together with patients to determine if stopping one or more medications is the right choice
- Depends on whether the benefits no longer outweigh the possible harms



Deprescribing

- Not for everyone
- Worth discussing with your doctor or pharmacist
- May decrease the risk of side effects and drug interactions



Deprescribing

- American Geriatrics Society Beers Criteria
 - This criteria identifies medications that may have more risks than benefit in adults 65 years old and older
 - Could be due to likelihood of developing side effects or the efficacy of the medication
 - Lists medications that may have drug-drug interactions
 - Mentions drugs that should have their dose adjusted or should be avoided in patients with poor kidney function
- Goal is to prevent medication side effects or other problems
- Healthcare professionals continually update this list



Deprescribing - Examples

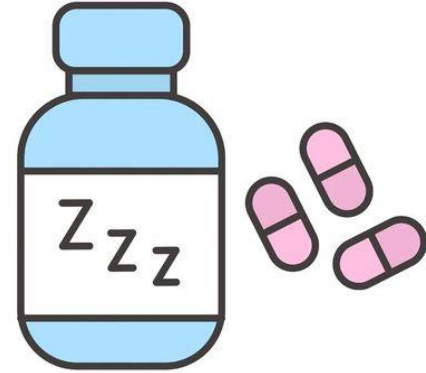
- Proton Pump Inhibitors (PPIs)
 - Omeprazole (Prilosec)
 - Pantoprazole (Protonix)
- People over the age of 18 who have taken a proton pump inhibitor (PPI) for more than 4-8 weeks, should talk to their provider about whether deprescribing the PPI would be best for them



Deprescribing - Examples

- Benzodiazepines & Z-Drugs (BZRA)

- Alprazolam (Xanax)
- Clonazepam (Rivotril)
- Diazepam (Valium)
- Lorazepam (Ativan)
- Tempazepam (Restoril)
- Zopiclone (Imovane)
- Zolpidem (Sublinox)



- People 18-64 years old taking a BZRA for insomnia for more than 4 weeks or people 65 years old or older taking a BZRA, should talk to their provider about deprescribing

Deprescribing – Examples

- Antihyperglycemics (Diabetes Medications)
- With age, risk of low blood sugar increases, especially for people:
 - With many medical conditions or low kidney function
 - With history of low blood sugars without symptoms
 - Who are taking insulin
 - Who are taking medications that can hide the symptoms of low blood sugar
 - Who have tight blood sugar control
- Low blood sugar can cause:
falls, fractures, confusions, hospitalizations



Steps You Can Take - Questions to Ask

- Always discuss new medications with your doctor and pharmacist
- When starting a new medication, what questions should you ask?
- For all medications, make sure you can answer the following:
 - What is this medication treating?
 - How should I take this medication?
 - What should I expect from this medication?



Steps You Can Take - Questions to Ask

- Some difficulties for taking medications can include:
 - Difficulty reading the labels on the bottles
 - Pharmacist can print out larger directions or discuss them in person when you pick up the medications
 - Challenge opening the containers or pouring medications
 - Easy open lids are available by request at the pharmacy
 - Trouble affording your medication
 - Talk with your doctor, pharmacist, and insurance company if cost is a barrier for picking up your medications



Steps You Can Take - Side Effects

- Be aware of side effects
- Report any side effects to your healthcare provider



Steps You Can Take

- Ask about over the counter medications / alternative remedies
- Tell all healthcare providers what medications you take over the counter or behind the counter
 - FDA does not regulate herbal products and supplements the way that prescription and over the counter medications are regulated
 - Over the counter products can still interact with prescription medications
 - For example: Ginkgo, St. John's wort, and fish oil all interact with blood thinning medications



Steps You Can Take

- Be mindful of the best medication resources to use
- Reliable resources
 - Doctor
 - Pharmacist
 - Other healthcare professionals



Reliable Resources

Strong Resources:	Use Caution With:
Doctor	Google
Pharmacist	Social Media
Other healthcare professionals	Radio
Paperwork received from the pharmacy	Advertisements
Website ending in .org .gov or .edu MedlinePlus www.medlineplus.gov CDC www.cdc.gov	

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