

Medication: _____
Prescribed by: _____ Date _____
Dosage: _____
Taken for: _____
Check one: OTC Physician Prescribed

Medication: _____
Prescribed by: _____ Date _____
Dosage: _____
Taken for: _____
Check one: OTC Physician Prescribed

Medication: _____
Prescribed by: _____ Date _____
Dosage: _____
Taken for: _____
Check one: OTC Physician Prescribed

Medication: _____
Prescribed by: _____ Date _____
Dosage: _____
Taken for: _____
Check one: OTC Physician Prescribed

Medication: _____
Prescribed by: _____ Date _____
Dosage: _____
Taken for: _____
Check one: OTC Physician Prescribed

Falls constitute a silent and serious public health hazard. According to data from the National Safety Council, each week more than 30,000 people over the age of 65 are seriously injured in a fall; nearly 25% die from their injuries. One out of every three seniors will fall in the next year. In Nebraska over 13,000 falls required emergency room treatment for our seniors in 2001 alone. The most serious fall-related injury is hip fracture. About half of all older adults hospitalized for hip fracture are unable to return home or live independently after the fracture. Statistical evidence predicts that as many as 24,000 of our 74,000 elderly in the greater Metro area will fall in the next year; 6,000 will die and others will suffer from a reduced quality of life. It doesn't have to be that way...

About F1RST

Through awareness, education, training and research proven interventions provided by a collaboration of many organizations in our community, F1RST engages our older adults, their adult children and caregivers in an effort to reduce the trauma and injuries caused by falling. F1RST provides help to our community and encourages others to participate in this important initiative. It will take a strong effort across our entire community to be successful in this endeavor.

Resources Available Through F1RST

Movement Improvement T'ai Chi, a proven intervention that prevents falling among older adults is available in the greater Omaha area.

A Matter of Balance is a structured group program, which helps participants reduce the fear of falling and improve activity levels among community-dwelling older adults.

The F1RST Tool Kit has helpful information from resources all across America. Included are: Balance Self Test, Getting Up from a Fall, Home Safety Checklist, Health & Exercise, Medication Tracker, and Adapting to Low Vision. Pick up your free kit today from the Safety Council.

Speakers, Demonstrations Available

Demonstration of Movement Improvement T'ai Chi, and speakers regarding the elderly falls issue are available.

Be a Volunteer!

Bring your knowledge, time and talent to benefit one of the risk areas. Join a task group developing interventions in one of the following: Physical Activity and Mobility, Medication Management, Home Safety, Cross-Cutting Issues such as hearing and vision, or Environmental Issues such as lighting, curbs, marked pedestrian ways.

*Thank you to the F1RST
Medication Management Task Group:*

James Summerfelt, Chairman
Visiting Nurse Association

Michele Faulkner, PharmD
Ann Ryan Haddad, PharmD
Creighton University School of
Pharmacy and Health Professions

Kay Farrell and Chris Cady
National Safety Council, Greater Omaha Chapter

Brenda Keller, MD
The Nebraska Medical Center

Ronnette Sailors
Alegent Health Parish Nurse Network

Bridget Young
Visiting Nurse Association



National Safety Council, Greater Omaha Chapter
United Way of the Midlands
Eastern Nebraska Office on Aging
University of Nebraska at Omaha

For more information:
11620 M Circle, Omaha, NE 68137
402-896-0454 www.F1RST.org

Medication Management Helps Prevent Falls!

How-To Guide and Medication Tracker



National Safety Council, Greater Omaha Chapter
United Way of the Midlands
Eastern Nebraska Office on Aging
University of Nebraska at Omaha

Tips for Safe Use of Medication

We are very fortunate today to have modern medicines to help treat many conditions that older adults experience. Prescription and nonprescription medications can treat and help diminish symptoms and lead to a more productive, healthier life.

But medicines are serious business. Some may be a cause of loss of balance and falling. And administering medication isn't always as easy as swallowing a pill. It may involve many steps and decisions every day.

Using your medications the appropriate way is an integral part of your health. The proper use of medicine helps you reap the full benefits from the medication you take and reduces the chances of side effects and problems that could happen from taking medication the wrong way.

Medicines may act differently in older adults than in younger people. This may be due to normal changes in the body that happen with age.

Please use the following tips, to ensure that you are getting the most benefit and using your medications safely.

Ask questions! You should know what your medication is for, what your dose is, and how often you should take it.

Take part in your treatment decisions. Don't be afraid to ask questions and talk about your concerns with your doctor. Ask about possible drug interactions with other medications you are taking (including things you buy without a prescription, such as vitamins, minerals, herbal and dietary supplements, pain relievers, laxatives, cold medication, and antacids). Make sure the drug is safe to take with your other medical problems. Know what the common side-effects are, especially if they affect your balance or alertness. Remember, you are ultimately in charge of your own health. Your pharmacist is also available to talk about medications you are taking.

Make sure all of your healthcare providers know what you are taking.

If you see more than one physician or use more than one pharmacy to get you prescriptions filled, and you don't let everyone involved know when changes are made, you may be setting yourself up for a dangerous situation. It is always wise to have your prescriptions filled at one pharmacy so they have a complete history of your medications. Keeping an up-to-date medication list in your wallet or purse is a good idea.

Continue communicating after your leave the physician's office or the pharmacy.

When you begin taking your medication, notice how you feel. Contact your doctor or pharmacist with questions if you think something is not right. Don't just stop taking the medication, because many drugs are potential life-savers! An alternative medication can usually be prescribed if the first one isn't right for you.

Don't assume that just because you feel better, you don't need the drug anymore.

Medications are used to treat a number of conditions that usually don't cause symptoms such as high blood pressure or cholesterol. The medication may need to be taken chronically to keep these conditions under control, and prevent complications such as heart attacks or stroke.

Don't stop your medication without consulting your healthcare provider unless you are experiencing what you believe is a serious side-effect.

Make sure that if you do feel you need to stop taking your medication that you communicate this to everyone involved in your care, and do so at your first opportunity.

Never share your medications with anyone else. This is true even if they have been diagnosed with the same condition as you.

There are subtle differences in people and their medical histories that might make a drug right for one person, but very wrong for another!

Don't change the dose on your own.

Many drugs are prescribed at specific doses based on a great deal of scientific data that tells us what works and what does not. More is not always better, and less may not be enough.

Understand that having a side-effect to a medication does not mean that you are allergic to it.

If a drug is listed in your allergy list by mistake, you may not get it in an emergency situation when it might be needed. Allergy symptoms may include rash, shortness of breath, and a tight feeling in the throat or chest. Nausea, headache, stomachache, blurred vision, and other such problems are side-effects, not allergies.

My Medications

Keep this handy medicine tracker in your purse or wallet at all times for easy reference.

Name: _____

Medication Review Date: _____

Allergies: _____

Include both your prescribed medications and Over the Counter (OTC) medications as OTC can have an affect on other medications.

Medication: _____

Prescribed by: _____ Date _____

Dosage: _____

Taken for: _____

Check one: OTC Physician Prescribed

Medication: _____

Prescribed by: _____ Date _____

Dosage: _____

Taken for: _____

Check one: OTC Physician Prescribed

Medication: _____

Prescribed by: _____ Date _____

Dosage: _____

Taken for: _____

Check one: OTC Physician Prescribed

