

# Medication Safety for Seniors

As you age, you are more likely to be prescribed more than one kind of medication. This increases the risk of drug interactions & side-effects. Medications can affect the way people think, move, or feel.

## Medication Safety Tips

- **Medications can interact** – Taking more than one drug at a time increases your risk of drug interactions & side effects (including alcohol, nutritional supplements, herbal products).
- **Be active in your health** – Make a list of questions for your doctor & request extra time if needed.
- **List everything you are taking & ask for exact instructions** (what, when, how, side effects, etc.).
- **Be open** & tell someone if you're having trouble with your medications (forgetting to take, experiencing side effects, etc.).
- **Ask your pharmacist** for verbal & written instructions.
- **Be safe at home** – Keep a list of all medications, use a pill organizer to keep track of when you take your pills, keep your medications in a safe place.
- **Do not share** medication & only take drugs prescribed for you.
- **Keep an eye on your medication expiry date.**



*Some seniors rely on medications to help cope with stress or loss.*

- **Retirement** - For some, change is easy but for others it may result in depression or isolation.
- **Isolation** - Lack of contact with friends & family can be difficult.
- **Grief** - Losing someone or something can be very painful.



*Taking too much medication, too often or not following your doctor's orders is dangerous & can lead to physical dependence or addiction.*

## Before using any drug, ask yourself:

- Why am I taking this drug?
- Is it really necessary to take this drug?
- How & when should I take this drug?
- What are the side effects?
- What are the interactions with other drugs? With alcohol?
- How long do I need to take this drug?



If you have any concerns about medication or addiction, contact your doctor or local **Mental Health & Addiction Services Office.**

NL Health Line  
1-888-709-2929

