

Tips for Taking Medicine Safely

From the Connecticut Poison Control Center

- ❖ Follow the 5 rights when taking medicine:
 - o The right person. Be sure that the right person is taking the medicine and do not take another person's medicine.
 - o The right dose. Always check for the proper amount. Consider writing down each dose given.
 - o The right medicine. Read the label – every time to avoid making a mistake. Know the names of your medicines.
 - o The right time. Follow the label and take medicine at the correct time of day. Some are taken once a day, some four times a day, some once a month.
 - o The right way. Follow instructions. Some medicines interact with certain foods, some need to be taken with food and some should not be taken with other medicines.
- ❖ Put your glasses on and turn the lights on before taking medication, especially at night!
- ❖ Do not share medicines. A medicine is prescribed for you and only you.
- ❖ It can be confusing when there are multiple doctors prescribing a variety of medications. Communicate with each doctor and your pharmacist so they can check for drug interactions. Write down all of your medicines.
- ❖ Know the abbreviations for tablespoon (Tbsp) and teaspoon (tsp). Don't confuse them.
- ❖ Only use the measuring device that came with the medicine, such as a dropper, medicine cup, or dosing spoon. Do not substitute another device. Avoid making conversions.
- ❖ Never play doctor. Twice the dose is not appropriate unless advised by a health care professional.
- ❖ Always use the child resistant cap and remember caps aren't child*proof*. Most poisonings happen when a product is in use. Return the container to the cabinet immediately and keep all medicines up and away and out of sight, and if possible locked up.
- ❖ Discard all expired and unused/leftover medicines.
- ❖ In case of an error in administration or accidental ingestion, don't wait for symptoms to appear; call the Connecticut Poison Control Center at 1-800-222-1222.

For more information go to our website at <https://health.uconn.edu/poison-control/>

