

## Taking your drugs

This handout provides a place to write information about each drug you take. It offers tips for talking with your doctor or pharmacist, choosing a pharmacy, storing your drugs, and lists tests you may need when taking drugs.

### Ask about each drug you take

- Name of drug: \_\_\_\_\_
- Why you are taking it: \_\_\_\_\_
- How often to take it: \_\_\_\_\_
- What time of day to take it: \_\_\_\_\_
- How many weeks or months to take it: \_\_\_\_\_
- What food you can eat at the same time you take it: \_\_\_\_\_
- What food not to eat when you take it: \_\_\_\_\_
- What are the side effects to watch out for: \_\_\_\_\_

### Ask again if you do not understand

- Ask your doctor to tell you how to take your drugs
- It is OK to ask again if you still do not understand
- Tell your doctor any worries you have about how the drug will make you feel

### Do not miss a dose

- Ask your doctor what you should do if you miss a dose
  - Wait until the next time you are to take it
  - Or, take it as soon as you remember
  - Or, take an extra dose the next time
- Do not skip a dose or take just half a dose

### Ask for help if you need it

- Tell your doctor if you need help getting your drugs
  - Ordering drugs
  - Getting to the store
  - Getting a refill on time
- Tell your doctor if you need help paying for your drugs
  - Do not miss a dose to save money
  - Do not take only half a dose to save money

## Taking your drugs (cont)

### Go to the same pharmacy for all your drugs

- The pharmacy will keep a record of all your drugs
- Order your drugs so you always have a 7 day supply on hand
- Ask questions about how to take each drug
- Ask for handouts

### Tell your doctor about ALL the drugs you take

- All drugs prescribed by a doctor
- All vitamins and herbs
- All cold or flu drugs
- All other drugs, like alternative or naturopathic drugs
- Tell your doctor if you changed the way you take your drugs

### Store drugs safely

- Store in a cool, dark place
- Keep in the bottle they came in, unless you use a pill box or organizer
  - Use a pill organizer if you take more than 1 pill a day
  - Show it to your doctor and ask if you are taking your pills the right way
- Keep drugs in a safe or locked place if there is a child in your home
- Do not share drugs with anyone
- Do not take drugs from another person
- Only take the drugs your doctor says you can take
- Throw out old drugs
  - Some drugs may need to go back to the doctor or pharmacy to be thrown out for you (ask your doctor or pharmacist)

### Tests you may need

- Blood pressure
- Blood sugar
- Blood tests to check your immune system
- Blood tests to check your liver or kidney function
- Ask your doctor if there are other tests you need

## **Taking your drugs (cont)**

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The content in this letter is intended as general information and may not apply to you or your condition. Talk to your doctor about how to best use this information and how to take care of your medical condition. This information is not intended to provide or replace professional medical advice or services.

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