

## 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**

### **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