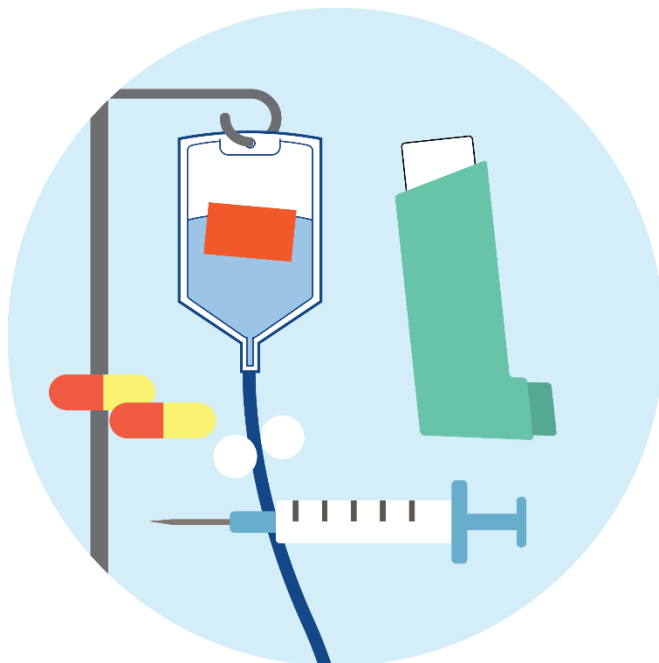


You and Your Medications

For your health and safety in hospital and at home



The booklet belongs to _____

Introduction

We encourage you to be actively involved in your care. We invite you to include your essential care partner and others important to you in talking about your medications. We always welcome questions about the medications we give you.

This booklet outlines ways we can work together to make sure you understand your medications while in the hospital, and make sure you can take them safely while at home.

Keeping you safe while in the hospital

Never take any medication if you don't know what it is or why we are giving it to you.

We supply all the medications you need. Expect your nurse to give you these medications while in hospital.

Tell us about all the medications you are taking at home, including herbal medicines, natural products, vitamins, and supplements. We compare what you take at home with the medications supplied by us to make sure you have all the medications you need.

Tell us if you brought with you any of your own medications, herbal medicines, natural products, vitamins, and supplements. We will review them with you. We might ask you to send them home with someone you trust.

While in the hospital, we might need to make changes to the medications you take. Changes could include:

- the type of medication
- the amount of medication
- the time you take the medication
- what the medication looks like

You can help us make sure you get the right medication at the right time by asking us some questions.

Here are some questions you can ask and why they are good to ask.



1. *Can you check my hospital arm band and ask my name?*

If we didn't already check, this prompts us to make sure we are giving the medication to the right person.

2. *Have you checked my allergies?*

This prompts us to learn more about any allergies or bad reactions you have had in the past from either medications or food.

3. *What is this medication called?*

This helps you learn what medication we are giving you. Medication names can sound similar to each other. We suggest you repeat the name to confirm you heard correctly.

4. *What am I taking this medication for?*

This prompts us to explain why you are getting this medication.

5. *How are you giving me this medication?*

Sometimes we give medications in different ways than the way you might take them at home. For example, we might give you a medication by injection. At home, you might take the medication as a pill. It is good to know how we give the medication while in the hospital.

6. *Does this medication have any unwanted side effects?*

We want you to know what to watch for so you can tell us right away if you notice any side effects.

7. *What time of day do I take this medication?*

To work best, people need to take their medications at the right time of day or night. Knowing when to take your medication means you will notice if the schedule changes.

8. *Can I take this medication with other medications?*

Some medications do not work the way they should when taken with other medications or supplements.

Below are the kinds of medications and supplements we need to know about.

Please tell us if you take any of these at home.

- prescription medications ordered by a doctor and filled by a pharmacist, including pills, patches, inhalers, creams, injections, and eye drops
- over-the-counter medications you buy at a pharmacy without a prescription, such as pain medications, cold medications, antacids, allergy medications, and laxatives
- samples of medications given to you by a doctor or other health professional
- vitamins and minerals
- natural remedies and herbal medicines, such as St. John's Wort, glucosamine, ginkgo
- diet or health supplements
- cannabis products

Make sure to tell us as well how much alcohol you drink and what other substances or drugs you use. These can also change how medications work.

Mistakes happen

We do our best to prevent mistakes, but they can happen.



Here is how you can help us reduce the chances of errors.

- Ask if a medication does not look familiar to you.
- Ask why we are giving a medication at a different time from your usual schedule at home.
- Ask us when you think you are not getting your usual medication.
- Speak up when you think we are going to give you the wrong medication.
- Tell us if you do not feel well after taking a medication.

If we do make a mistake in the medication we give, this is what we always do.

- Report the mistake to you right away
- Document the mistake in your health record.
- Review the reason for the mistake.
- Learn from the mistake to keep it from happening again.

Getting ready to go home

The medications you take when you go home from hospital might be different from the ones you took before you came to the hospital.

Here are questions to ask before you go home.



1. *Have I had any new medications while in hospital?*

Make sure you are being given the correct medication. If we have given you new medications, it is important that you understand what they are.

Remember to ask:

- How do I take this medication?
 - Can I take it with food?
 - How will this new medication help me?
 - How long do I take this new medication?
 - Where is the best place to keep this medication?
2. *Which medications do I continue to take at home?*
Some medications are only given to you while you are recovering in the hospital.
 3. *Which medications do I stop taking when I am home?*
After your hospital stay, you might need to stop taking certain medications.

4. Do I take my medications in a different way?

After your hospital stay, we might change how and when you take your medications.

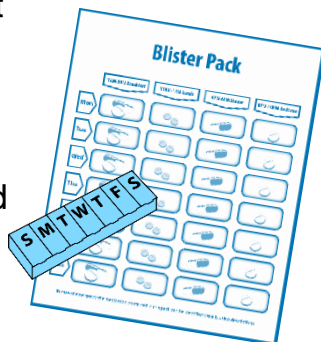
Ask for a list of all your medications, including any new ones. Read the list carefully. Ask us to explain what each medication is for if you are not sure.

Let us know if you have any questions about your follow up care, including when you should see your family doctor or other specialists.

Managing your medications at home

It can be hard to remember when to take your medications when you are home. Here are some ways to keep track of what medications to take and when to take them.

- Ask your community pharmacist for help organizing your medications at home. Together, you decide which option will work best for you. Options could include:
 - pill boxes or blister packs
 - medication calendar
 - automatic pill dispenser
- Use your cell phone or another device to set electronic reminders for taking your medications.
- Always talk to your doctor or pharmacist before doing any of these things:
 - before changing the way you take your medications
 - before starting any new over-the-counter medication, herbal medicine, or supplement
 - before stopping any medication



- Only take those medications prescribed for you, not those prescribed for someone else. Never allow anyone to take your medications either. Both of these activities are very dangerous. Taking a medication not intended for you could result in a serious reaction.
- Take all medications you are no longer taking back to the pharmacy so that can be safely disposed. Help protect the environment. Never flush medications down the toilet or put them in the garbage.
- Ask your pharmacist to review your medications, every year and when a new medication is added.
- Carry a list of your medications with you.
To help with this, Download “My Medication Card”.

- Scan this QR code to download. It is available in a number of languages.
- Fill it in either electronically or print and write in your medications.


A template for a 'My Medication Card' with a blue and orange header. The text on the card reads: 'My Medication Card', 'Carry a list of the medicines you currently take with you at all times. Show this list with your doctor, pharmacist, and other caregivers to help them provide you with the best care.', and four input fields: 'My name', 'BC Services Card/OneCard number', 'Emergency contact and phone number', 'Doctor's name and phone number', 'Pharmacy name and phone number', and 'Other doctors (specialists)'. The Fraser Health logo is at the bottom.

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This information does not replace the advice given to you by your healthcare provider.

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