

## WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT EACH MEDICINE YOU TAKE

What is the name of each medication?

What is it for?

What time should you take it?

How much of it should you take each time?

How should you take it?

Should you take it with food?

How long should you take it?

What should you do if you miss a dose?

Are there any side effects? What should you do if you have any?

Is it safe to take with other medications you are taking, including over-the-counter medication, vitamins or herbals?

What food, drink or activities should you avoid while taking it?

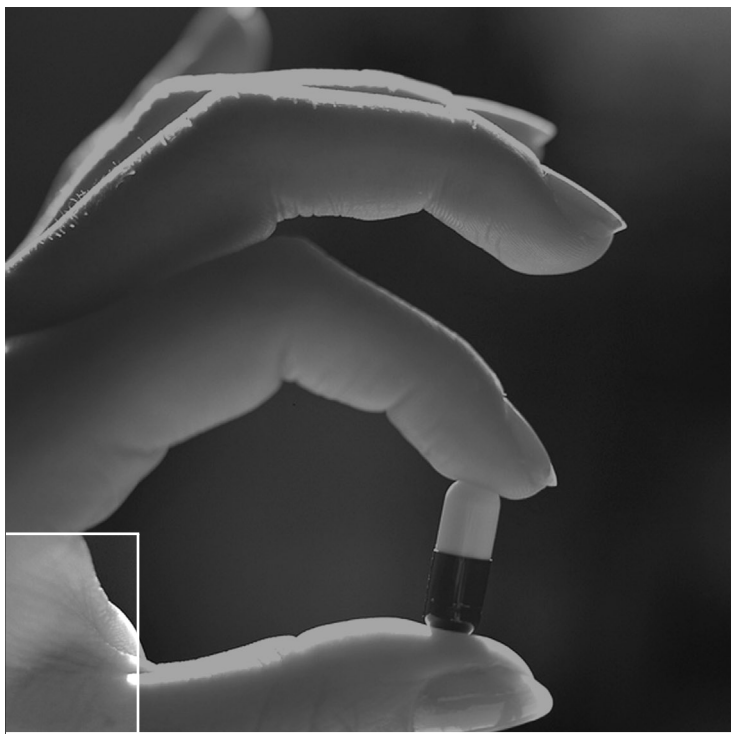


Alabama Hospital Association  
500 North East Blvd. Montgomery, AL 36117  
(334) 272-8781

## Medication SAFETY TIPS

Important information you need to know





**Being safe about your medications could save your life. One important safety tip is to know exactly what medicines you take, how much you take and when you take them...and to be able to give this information to your caregivers. To help you keep track of your medications, Alabama's hospitals are offering a special form, called a **Universal Medication Form**. You can get this form at your local hospital or on-line at [www.alaha.org](http://www.alaha.org). This pamphlet gives suggestions for ways you can use the Universal Medication Form, as well as many other medication safety tips.**

## At Home

Take only the medication given to you by your doctor or pharmacist. Do not share other people's medication.

Each time you take your medication, read the label to make sure you are taking it correctly. If you have questions, call your doctor or pharmacist.

Do not stop taking medication just because you feel better unless your doctor tells you to stop taking it.

Do not take your medication out of one bottle and put it in another one.

Put all of your medication in a place where children and pets cannot reach it.

Keep your Universal Medication Form updated.

Put medications in a pill box that separates them by days of the week.

Do not keep medication in the car, by the stove or in the bathroom, since heat and dampness can affect how it works.

Throw away medication if the date written on the bottle has passed.

If you feel any medication is making you sick or causing you pain, call your doctor right away.



## In the Hospital

When you are admitted to the hospital, take your updated Universal Medication Form or bring all of your medications in the original bottles. Include over-the-counter medicines, vitamins and herbals. Tell your doctor or nurse

about any allergies or reactions that you have had in the past.

If you feel any medication is making you sick or causing you pain, tell the doctor or nurse immediately.

When you are being sent home from the hospital, ask your doctor or nurse to clearly tell you what medications you should be taking and how to take them.

## At the Drugstore

Take new medication prescriptions and refills to the same drugstore. The pharmacist then can make sure all of the medications work together and will not make you sick.

If you use more than one drugstore, make sure each one has a list of all of your medications.

Ask the pharmacist the name of the medication and how you should take it. Make sure this information matches what your doctor told you.

Make sure any refill of the medication is the same color, size and shape. If there is any difference, ask why.

If you have ANY questions about your medication, ask your pharmacist.

## At the Doctor's Office

Always take your updated Universal Medication Form. This will tell your doctor everything you are taking, including prescription medications, over-the-counter medications, vitamins and herbals.

Tell your doctor about any allergies or reactions that you have had in the past.

