



PHARMACISTS AND YOUR SAFETY

You probably don't think about the pharmacy as part of your healthcare team, but your local pharmacist(s) can be critical part of how you manage and protect your health.

Each year in the United States, adverse drug events—harm resulting from medication use—cause or result in more than one million visits to hospital emergency departments.



Pharmacists are trained to understand the chemical qualities of prescription medications, how they interact with each other and how they will affect you. A pharmacist can identify a potential bad interaction between medication(s) you are currently taking, and one you are newly prescribed.



Ask your pharmacist questions about your medication(s), particularly new ones, along with questions about side effects and risks. Here are some examples:

- What does this medication do, and what is it called?
- How should I take this medication (ex: time of day, as needed, with food, not with other medications)?
- What if I miss a dose?
- What side effects are possible?
- How do I know if it is working?
- When can I stop taking this medication and do I need to refill it?
- Are there over-the-counter medications, vitamins or other things I should avoid while taking this medication?
- Could it interfere with other medications I am taking?
- Where should I store this medication?
- Do I need to finish this prescription? If not, how and where should I dispose of the unused portion?

Sources:

- https://health.uconn.edu/pharmacy/wp-content/uploads/sites/60/2016/03/questions_you_should_ask.pdf
- <https://patch.com/missouri/ladue-frontenac/improper-use-prescription-medication-rise-0>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/features/pharmacist-month/index.html>