

Why and how do we use medication responsibly? - Medshield

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Medication and the rapidly evolving science of medication development can be very beneficial and significantly aid one's health and quality of life. However, it is crucial to use medication responsibly to ensure its effectiveness and safety. According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), 50% of all patients take medicines incorrectly. Overuse, underuse and misuse of medication result in the wastage of scarce resources, continued health problems or adverse reactions to drugs.

There are more opportunities today than ever to learn about the medication you take and the particular drug that it contains. If you take several medicines, consult various doctors, or manage specific health conditions, your doctors must know all the medicines you take. Doing so will help you to avoid potential problems such as medication interactions. Medication interactions may cause your prescription to be less effective, cause unexpected side effects, and even harm you.



Understanding different categories of medication interactions

- How medication interacts with other medicines, supplements and drugs: The interaction may lead to unexpected side effects. For example, combining two drugs that do not interact well with each other can slow your reactions, potentially making activities like driving dangerous.
- How medication interacts with food and beverages: For example, mixing alcohol with some medicine can cause drowsiness.
- How medication interacts with certain health conditions: The interaction may occur when an existing medical condition makes certain drugs potentially harmful. For example, if you have high blood pressure and take a nasal decongestant, your blood pressure could rise further, leading to an unwanted reaction.

Taking the time to learn about medication interactions and the responsible use of medication is critical for your health, especially when buying over-the-counter (OTC) medicine. When purchasing OTC medicine, you may not always have a

health professional available to explain how to use the medicine responsibly. But do not worry, medication will always come with a label and instructions. It is essential to read and understand the label on your medicine to avoid medication interactions. Here are some critical elements of the label to pay attention to:

- The **active ingredients** section provides information about each active ingredient's name, amount and purpose.
- The **uses** section indicates what the medicine is used for and helps you find the best therapy for your specific symptom.
- The **warnings** section offers important precautionary information, such as when the drug should not be used and when to stop taking it.
- The **directions** section of the label provides instructions on how much and for how long you can safely use the product and any special instructions on how to use the product.
- The **other information** section offers additional information, like how to store the medicine.
- The **inactive ingredients** section lists other ingredients in the drug, such as colouring and flavouring.

Medshield believes in providing comprehensive benefits to ensure that you and your healthcare provider can use our services best. Our care coordination approach is designed to help Family Practitioners navigate these benefits effectively to fulfil your healthcare requirements. By empowering your doctor with the ability to coordinate different health services, we ensure that you receive proper treatment at every stage of your care journey. Our care coordination approach also helps improve clinical outcomes, reduces morbidity, and makes healthcare more member-centric. This way, we reduce the burden on you and your family members, making accessing the care you need easier.

When you receive a new prescription, discuss all OTC and prescription drugs, dietary supplements, vitamins, and minerals with your healthcare provider.

Medshield offers nine tailored healthcare options, including two Efficiency Discount Options. These healthcare options are reinforced by comprehensive private hospital cover, and medication benefits. In addition, members can access a network of respected healthcare professionals and resources to support their health journey at all life stages.

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