



Tips for Talking to Your Parents About Medication

- Know what medicines are being taken. Go to one pharmacy for all prescriptions. This can help avoid drug interactions, lessen the chance of taking similar medicines prescribed by different providers, and act as a prescription renewal reminder.
- Maintain a medicine list with the drug name, what it's taken for, the dosage, how often it's taken and other details. Bring this to healthcare appointments.
- Go to medical appointments with the person in your care, if possible. Share your concerns and take notes!
- Encourage writing down concerns before medical appointments. For example, is the medication helping? Are there side effects? Again, take notes! (10 Questions to Ask About the Medicines You Take)
- Review medicine labels to understand potential side effects or drug interactions.
- Make sure he/she can read, understand, and follow dosing instructions. Do they understand when to take the medication, forgetting a dose, or unable to tell pills apart?
- Ask if help is needed putting together a medicine schedule.
- Ask how he/she takes the medicine. Is the drug being taken safely and correctly to maximize the benefits?
- Stress not making decisions about medicines alone, without a healthcare professional. Suddenly stopping some medicines can be dangerous.
- If your parents have vision problems or difficulty with written English, suggest color-coding prescription bottles and put colors on a chart that gives directions for each drug. Ask the pharmacist for large print labels. If arthritis is an issue, request non-child proof caps. It's essential to store medicines out of sight and reach of children.
- Make taking medicines part of a daily routine. For example, if a parent always has a morning cup of tea, leave a reminder by the tea cups.
- Periodically discuss "deprescribing" with the doctor. Review all meds to see if any can be safely stopped.