

Tips for Patients:

- Ensure all health professionals involved in your care have all important health information about you, including all medications you are taking. Don't assume they have this information.
- Make a list of medications you are taking -- when you visit the doctor, go to the hospital or see another healthcare professional, bring this list, or the medications themselves in their original bottle, with you.
- Ensure all medications you are taking are on your list – including herbal supplements, vitamins and other over-the-counter medications, such as cold medicine. These could have an effect on your prescriptions.
- Ask someone to be your health advocate to help listen for you, take notes, ask questions and if needed, make decisions on your behalf.
- Make your doctor aware if you have seen or are seeing more than one doctor about your problems.
- Take your medications as prescribed. Ensure you understand what the medicine is for, how you are supposed to take it and any possible side effects. If you are unclear about a medication or are concerned about side effects, contact your doctor or pharmacist immediately.
- Keep track of any adverse reactions or allergies you have to food or medications and share these with your doctors, pharmacist or other healthcare providers.
- If you're being discharged from the hospital, ask your doctor to write down and review with you any treatment plans or instructions you will need at home. This information should be shared with your family doctor as well.
- Talk to your pharmacist to ensure the medication dispensed is the one prescribed for your condition.
- Keep a medical journal that keeps the details about your treatment and care. Include information such as medications prescribed, tests you receive and other important information provided by your health care team. If you're unable to do this, ask a friend or family member to do this for you.
- Don't be afraid to ask questions of your healthcare providers about your medications and treatments. Talk to him or her about any concerns you have and listen to what he or she is saying. If you do not fully understand, tell them you do not understand or ask further questions.
- Remember – the best decisions about your healthcare are made together. You, or a family member, are best able to tell your doctor or healthcare provider about any problems you are having and are an important part of your healthcare team. Working with your healthcare providers to provide the most accurate and up-to-date information is crucial to ensuring you receive the best care possible.
- Visit www.patientsafetyweek.ca for more tips and resources and to find out more about Canadian Patient Safety Week.

Ask. Talk. Listen. Questionnez. Parlez-en. Écoutez.

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