

Patients as Partners in Care:

Things you can do to prevent medication mistakes

You have the right to express concerns about care and safety while in the hospital. Inside the hospital, you may call Careline (Dial C.A.R.E. [2273]. Outside NMMC, call (662) 377-2273 or visit www.nmhs.net/contact_us.

If concerns cannot be resolved through the hospital, you may contact The Joint Commission at 1-800-994-6610 or by e-mailing complaint@jointcommission.org, and/or if you are a beneficiary of Medicare covered services, you may report any concerns you have to the Quality Improvement Organization (QIO) Information and Quality Healthcare 1-866-775-5897.



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Joint Commission
on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations
Setting the Standard for Quality in Health Care



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Medication mistakes happen every day – at the doctor’s office, hospital, even at home. Some mistakes are more serious than others, but medication mistakes can be prevented. Here are some basic things you can do to help prevent a medication mistake from happening to you or your loved ones.

- Share with your doctor, nurse and pharmacist a list of your allergies, current medicines, vitamins, herbs and supplements. Ask if there are any of these that you should not take with your new medicines.
- If you are taking a lot of medicines, ask your doctor if it is safe to take those medicines together. Do the same thing with vitamins, herbs and other supplements.
- Ask your doctor how a new medication will help. Ask for written information about it, including its brand and generic names and the directions for taking it. Read the directions and make sure you understand them. Ask any questions you have before leaving the hospital or clinic.
- Ask about the possible side effects of your medicines. Find out if your new medicines can make you sleepy or forgetful, dizzy or confused. Find out what you should do if you experience any side effects.
- Tell your nurse or doctor if you don’t feel well after receiving a medicine. If you think you are having a reaction or experiencing side effects, ask for help immediately.
- Read the label on your prescription medicine. Make sure it has your name on it and the correct medicine name.
- Ask if there are any foods and drinks – including alcohol – that you should avoid.
- Ask your doctor or pharmacist whether you can cut or crush a medicine.
- Take your medicine as it is prescribed and do not stop taking it without asking your doctor.
- If you’re not feeling well enough to ask questions about your medicines, ask a relative or friend to ask questions for you and to help make sure you get and take the right medicines.
- When you are in the hospital, make sure the doctor or nurse checks your wristband and asks your name before giving you medicine.
- When you are in the hospital, don’t be afraid to tell the nurse or the doctor if you think you are about to get the wrong medicine.
- When you are in the hospital, know what time you normally get a medicine. If you don’t get it then, tell your nurse or doctor.
- When you are in the hospital and receive intravenous (IV) fluids, read the contents of the bags of IV fluids. If you’re not well enough to do this, ask a relative or friend to do it.
- When you leave the hospital, review the list of all the medicines you will be taking at home for accuracy. You or your doctor should also share the list with anyone providing you with follow-up care.