



MEDICATIONS LIFESAVERS...OR?

To be safe and effective, medications need to be taken as directed by the physician.

Yet it is estimated that 30 to 50 percent of all prescriptions are not taken properly.

Human beings make mistakes. The possibility of a medication error exists each time a medication is taken.

Between 44,000 and 98,000 Americans die each year as a result of medication errors.

A LITTLE TIME.....A LITTLE ENERGY.....

YIELD BIG RESULTS IN MEDICATION MANAGEMENT

GENERAL RULES:

- **NEVER** increase or decrease the medication dosage. Only a doctor can make this change.
- **NEVER** skip a dose or take extra later to make up for a missed dose without consulting the prescribing physician.
- **KEEP** medications in the package they come in – so there is no confusion over contents.
- Make sure **ORIGINAL** labels are intact.
- Keep medications in a **SAFE PLACE** to avoid misuse.
- **NEVER** give a person medication that was prescribed for someone else.
- **KEEP** records up-to-date and very clearly written.
- Make sure a **DOCTOR** evaluates all medications a person takes.
REMEMBER: some medications counteract each other.
- **INFORM** the doctor about allergies or medications that have caused problems in the past.

- **PROPERLY DISPOSE** of all medications that are past the expiration date.
- Know your **LIMITS** if you are providing Nurse Delegation or Medication Administration.
- If you have a **QUESTION** about a medication, write it down and get it answered by your delegating nurse, or pharmacist, or doctor.
- **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION** about specific medications can be found online at search sites such as: <http://www.fda.gov/cder/drug/default.htm>
- **PREPARE** a list of medications that the person is taking and take that **LIST** to the doctor.

Some Questions for the Doctor or Delegating Nurse or Pharmacist:



- **What is the medicine for?**
- **Will it interact** with medicines already being taken?
- **How often** should it be taken?
- **How much** should be taken?
- Are there any **foods or other medications, supplements or other things** that should not be taken with it?
- Should it be **taken with** food or on an empty stomach?
- Are there any **special instructions**?
- Are there **side effects** we should watch for and should we report them?
- Can we do anything to **prevent side effects**?
- What should we do if a **dose is missed or incorrect dose given**?
- Do **blood levels** need to be checked with this medication? How often?



THREE KEY THINGS TO REMEMBER

 **KEEP CAREFUL RECORDS OF EACH MEDICATION ~ HOW OFTEN IT SHOULD BE GIVEN AND WHEN IT WAS TAKEN**

 **KNOW WHAT THE MEDICATION IS FOR AND WHAT THE SIDE-EFFECTS ARE**

 **ASK QUESTIONS IF YOU HAVE ANY CONCERNS AT ALL**