



A Nonprofit Advancing Best Practices PO Box 247 Portland ME 04112 www.PreventMedicalError.org

Best Practices: A "Top Ten" List

Here is a "Top Ten" list of best practices that are known to make health care more efficient and effective. These simple things can have a big impact. Please share them with your providers.

1. Medication List (a.k.a. "Meds List")
2. Medical Record Keeping (electronic and hard copy)
3. Medical Information Flow (your role) & Medical Appoint Management (collaboration)
4. Medic-Alert Jewelry (fashion meets function)
5. Physician/Pharmacist Contact (cell phone power)
6. Prescription Drugs and Supplements (dates matter)
7. Side-Effects (becoming an informed consumer)
8. Generic Drugs and Supplements (important information about outsourced manufacturing)
9. Timing (is everything)
10. What to Keep (and what not to keep)

© 2007 - 2008 Prevent Medical Error. All rights reserved. For personal use only. Please share and discuss this information with your licensed treating providers. For multiple copies, please contact Prevent Medical Error for permission. This information is for informational purposes only, and not intended to take the place of your doctor, nurse practitioner, pharmacist or other health care professionals. Please consult your licensed health care provider(s) before making any medical decisions. Patients under 18 years of age should also consult with their parent(s) or guardian before making any health care decisions. If you are having a medical emergency or a suspected medical emergency, please immediately contact your health care provider, call 911, and/or go to your local emergency room. Please refer to Prevent Medical Error's terms of use for additional information.

This information is presented "As is" without any express or implied warranty of any kind. It is not meant to serve as a recommendation or endorsement of any organization or company unless specifically stated as such. The reader will not hold Prevent Medical Error or our sponsors and supporters liable under any circumstances for their use (or misuse) of this information.



A Nonprofit Advancing Best Practices PO Box 247 Portland ME 04112 www.PreventMedicalError.org

Top Ten Best Practices known to make health care more efficient and effective:

1. Medication List (a.k.a. "Meds List")

The most important thing that you and your providers can do to prevent medical errors is to develop and maintain a medication-provider contact list. The goal is to create an emergency medical document that is accurate and comprehensive yet succinct enough to work well for both your current health care providers and first responders (paramedics, EMTs and emergency room physicians) and your emergency contact.

Don't be afraid to ask your treating providers for help and suggestions. Here are some ideas on what to include:

- Write: "Private Health Information (PHI): for use by treating providers and first responders only" at the top of your meds list
- Your name, contact information, and a photo for ID purposes;
- Date your meds list; remember to update and re-date as necessary
- The names of ALL of the medications, supplements and over-the-counter medications that you are taking;
- The length of time that you have taken the drug, the dosage, the protocol, how it is administered; and any special instructions
- Contact information: Include office numbers and emergency contact information (pager #'s, or answering service #'s) for your healthcare providers and emergency contact
- List any allergies, sensitivities, contraindications, and previous Adverse Drug Events
- Give your current meds-list to your emergency contact, ALL of your physicians, your pharmacist(s) your dentist, your eye doctor.

© 2007 - 2008 Prevent Medical Error. All rights reserved. For personal use only. Please share and discuss this information with your licensed treating providers. For multiple copies, please contact Prevent Medical Error for permission. This information is for informational purposes only, and not intended to take the place of your doctor, nurse practitioner, pharmacist or other health care professionals. Please consult your licensed health care provider(s) before making any medical decisions. Patients under 18 years of age should also consult with their parent(s) or guardian before making any health care decisions. If you are having a medical emergency or a suspected medical emergency, please immediately contact your health care provider, call 911, and/or go to your local emergency room. Please refer to Prevent Medical Error's terms of use for additional information.

This information is presented "As is" without any express or implied warranty of any kind. It is not meant to serve as a recommendation or endorsement of any organization or company unless specifically stated as such. The reader will not hold Prevent Medical Error or our sponsors and supporters liable under any circumstances for their use (or misuse) of this information.



A Nonprofit Advancing Best Practices PO Box 247 Portland ME 04112 www.PreventMedicalError.org

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS:

If you only use one pharmacy, ask your pharmacist to print out a copy of your prescription report, add any missing information, over-the-counter drugs, supplements, vitamins, your emergency buddy's name and contact information, a recent photo of yourself, pager numbers for your physicians, and then date the document. Have it scanned into a PDF file. Remember to give a scanned copy to your pharmacist.

If you are stabilized on a dose of one or two drugs, and do not have a long list of drug sensitivities, you can take your latest pharmacy receipt, white out the prices and any other unnecessary information. Write remaining information on the front or back of the receipt, add a recent photo, and have it laminated. If the receipt is bigger than a business card, you take it to a copy center and have it reduced to the size of a business card so you can carry this around in your wallet or purse. You can also put it in a luggage tag with your name and "Emergency Info" face up and attach it to a briefcase or a child's school backpack. Tell your prescribers, your emergency contact, a co-worker or a school nurse about the emergency card. Make sure that you date and update this information.

- Precautions:

Many over-the-counter drugs and supplements can interact with prescription medication; they can cause side effects or complications. Include the protocols or drugs that you have had reactions to on your Meds List, you can list them under the heading DO NOT PRESCRIBE or MONITOR CLOSELY.

If your drug protocol changes frequently, put a reminder system in place so that your list gets updated and stays current.

Ask your providers to help you make and keep your medication list updated.

2. Medical Record Keeping (electronic and hard copy)

Some people use a PDA (personal digital assistant, like a palm pilot) to play games; you can put yours to use to save your or a loved one's life. Synch your physician contact and medication list - a.k.a. meds list - to your home computer and update it frequently. You also scan your pharmacy medication, supplement and over-the counter drug list into PDF and

© 2007 - 2008 Prevent Medical Error. All rights reserved. For personal use only. Please share and discuss this information with your licensed treating providers. For multiple copies, please contact Prevent Medical Error for permission. This information is for informational purposes only, and not intended to take the place of your doctor, nurse practitioner, pharmacist or other health care professionals. Please consult your licensed health care provider(s) before making any medical decisions. Patients under 18 years of age should also consult with their parent(s) or guardian before making any health care decisions. If you are having a medical emergency or a suspected medical emergency, please immediately contact your health care provider, call 911, and/or go to your local emergency room. Please refer to Prevent Medical Error's terms of use for additional information.

This information is presented "As is" without any express or implied warranty of any kind. It is not meant to serve as a recommendation or endorsement of any organization or company unless specifically stated as such. The reader will not hold Prevent Medical Error or our sponsors and supporters liable under any circumstances for their use (or misuse) of this information.



A Nonprofit Advancing Best Practices PO Box 247 Portland ME 04112 www.PreventMedicalError.org

synch it to your PDA. You can beam your list to your healthcare providers before or during an office visit, but always provide a dated hardcopy for your medical file. Most importantly, this medical information can be accessed by a first responder in an emergency. Most PDAs today are internet-ready, so you need to balance access with medical privacy and take appropriate security precautions to protect your medical information. You can put a day-glo sticker on the back of your PDA that contains written instructions on how to access your meds list. Show your emergency contact, work mate or the school nurse where and how to access your meds list. Also tell your providers.

If your latest technology is an eight-track tape player, put a teenager's downloading aptitude to a lawful use: have him or her scan or copy your meds list and your medical records onto a CD or a portable USB drive. Either can efficiently organize and store your medical records; they offer the advantages of portability and privacy. It is also an inexpensive way to make multiple copies of your medical records or meds list for your healthcare providers. If there are computer security concerns, you may want to copy the list onto CD or a portable drive and then delete it from your computer.

Because a computer is required to access the information stored on CDs and portable USB drives (and because a PDA may malfunction and batteries may need replacement or recharging) keep a dated hard copy of your meds list. Show a family member, your emergency contact, a workmate, or the school nurse where and how to access the list in an emergency. Instruct prescribers and their staff on where and how to access the list in an emergency.

- Precautions:

Take appropriate privacy and security precautions. Remember that an email from a computer or PDA can be intercepted and accessed when sent without encryption. Some USB drives can be accessed by anyone who finds them, but for a bit more money, you can buy one with advanced security features that allows only certain people to access the data through fingerprint recognition technology.

- If you are concerned about privacy with regard to your diagnosis or other private medical information, password protect your PDA and give your password to anyone you would want to be able to operate your PDA in an emergency. You can also fingerprint protect it and carry a portable copy on an

© 2007 - 2008 Prevent Medical Error. All rights reserved. For personal use only. Please share and discuss this information with your licensed treating providers. For multiple copies, please contact Prevent Medical Error for permission. This information is for informational purposes only, and not intended to take the place of your doctor, nurse practitioner, pharmacist or other health care professionals. Please consult your licensed health care provider(s) before making any medical decisions. Patients under 18 years of age should also consult with their parent(s) or guardian before making any health care decisions. If you are having a medical emergency or a suspected medical emergency, please immediately contact your health care provider, call 911, and/or go to your local emergency room. Please refer to Prevent Medical Error's terms of use for additional information.

This information is presented "As is" without any express or implied warranty of any kind. It is not meant to serve as a recommendation or endorsement of any organization or company unless specifically stated as such. The reader will not hold Prevent Medical Error or our sponsors and supporters liable under any circumstances for their use (or misuse) of this information.



A Nonprofit Advancing Best Practices PO Box 247 Portland ME 04112 www.PreventMedicalError.org

advanced security USB drive. If you decide to leave your diagnosis off of your portable meds list, check with your primary care provider to ensure that all of your healthcare providers have access to your updated diagnosis list.

- You may also want to consider backing up your data on more than one storage device. For instance, copy your most current medication and provider list on two separate CDs or onto one CD and one portable USB drive.

3. Medical Information Flow (your role) & Medical Appoint Management (collaboration)

Physicians, nurses, pharmacists and other healthcare providers are not omnipotent; like their patients, they are human. Many medical errors that commonly occur are due to transcription errors and communication gaps; many are easily preventable. Work proactively to prevent medical errors:

You can ask for a copy of your appointment notes and laboratory results; keep a hard copy of your records and laboratory results in a categorized/tabbed loose leaf binder. Find out how your PCP's office manager manages your file, and organize your medical records binder so that it works well with their file system. Bring the binder with you to every medical appointment (i.e. dentist, eye doctor etc.); be sure to include 2 hardcopies of your meds list – one for you, and one for your healthcare provider.

You may want to review appointment notes and write down questions on the copy or on a note page in your binder in advance of your next medical appointment.

Try to plan your medical appointment time like a board meeting; prepare an agenda and maintain a schedule. At the beginning of each visit, you may want to review and correct previous medical records and laboratory results; review your updated meds list. You can then follow-up on previous appointments before moving on to new items.

Most importantly, leave a minute or two at the end of each appointment to summarize the appointment and any follow-up.

© 2007 - 2008 Prevent Medical Error. All rights reserved. For personal use only. Please share and discuss this information with your licensed treating providers. For multiple copies, please contact Prevent Medical Error for permission. This information is for informational purposes only, and not intended to take the place of your doctor, nurse practitioner, pharmacist or other health care professionals. Please consult your licensed health care provider(s) before making any medical decisions. Patients under 18 years of age should also consult with their parent(s) or guardian before making any health care decisions. If you are having a medical emergency or a suspected medical emergency, please immediately contact your health care provider, call 911, and/or go to your local emergency room. Please refer to Prevent Medical Error's terms of use for additional information.

This information is presented "As is" without any express or implied warranty of any kind. It is not meant to serve as a recommendation or endorsement of any organization or company unless specifically stated as such. The reader will not hold Prevent Medical Error or our sponsors and supporters liable under any circumstances for their use (or misuse) of this information.



A Nonprofit Advancing Best Practices PO Box 247 Portland ME 04112 www.PreventMedicalError.org

- Precautions:

You may want to have the office staff copy your list of appointment questions for your file.

4. Medic-Alert Jewelry (fashion meets function)

If you have a chronic illness, take medication, or you have allergies, or a provider recommends it, wear a medic alert bracelet or necklace. If existing medic alert jewelry does not seem well designed or fashionable, you can retrofit your jewelry or buy a new piece of jewelry that can easily be retrofitted for a medic alert charm. You may want to use heavy-duty lobster clasps; they are easy to attach and withstand heavy wear. You can retrofit bracelets and necklaces to easily attach your medic alert charms to your existing jewelry, and easily retrofit new jewelry for the medic alert charms.

In many cases, a medic alert charm is custom engraved with your name and information about your particular condition. Ask your treating providers and/or a first responder to help you figure out what to engrave on your medic alert. For example, If you are on a drug that is not listed in the *Physician's Desk Reference* or another standard drug reference, you might have your name, "nonPDR meds" and pager numbers for one or more of your prescribers engraved on your medical alert charm.

- Precautions:

Show your medic alert bracelet or necklace to your co-workers, and/or your children's medic alert jewelry to their teachers, etc., so it will occur to them to consult it or point it out in an emergency.

At least once a year, check your medic alert and medication list contact information and make sure that it is current.

5. Physician/Pharmacist Contact (cell phone power)

Carry a cell phone with you at all times. Put physician contact information on speed dial on your cell phone! You can add a day-glo sticker on the back of the cell phone that has your name and number, and speed dial directory of your treating physicians. Carry your cell phone with you.

© 2007 - 2008 Prevent Medical Error. All rights reserved. For personal use only. Please share and discuss this information with your licensed treating providers. For multiple copies, please contact Prevent Medical Error for permission. This information is for informational purposes only, and not intended to take the place of your doctor, nurse practitioner, pharmacist or other health care professionals. Please consult your licensed health care provider(s) before making any medical decisions. Patients under 18 years of age should also consult with their parent(s) or guardian before making any health care decisions. If you are having a medical emergency or a suspected medical emergency, please immediately contact your health care provider, call 911, and/or go to your local emergency room. Please refer to Prevent Medical Error's terms of use for additional information.

This information is presented "As is" without any express or implied warranty of any kind. It is not meant to serve as a recommendation or endorsement of any organization or company unless specifically stated as such. The reader will not hold Prevent Medical Error or our sponsors and supporters liable under any circumstances for their use (or misuse) of this information.



A Nonprofit Advancing Best Practices PO Box 247 Portland ME 04112 www.PreventMedicalError.org

- **Precautions:**

Develop a routine time and place for charging your cell phone to be sure it is charged when you need it most. Keeping an automobile charger in your car and an extra wall charger with your travel kit can prevent you from losing track of your charger when you need it most.

6. Prescription Drugs and Supplements (becoming an informed consumer)

Drug reactions and interactions can be *life saving*; however, even when drugs are prescribed correctly, or if they are prescribed incorrectly or misused, the resulting drug interaction(s)/reactions can also be life-threatening.

If you take prescription drugs or supplements remember the following:

- Adverse drug events (ADEs) are one of the leading causes of death in this country.
- It is estimated that ADEs kill more Americans every year than strokes or auto accidents.
- American women have more drug reactions than men.
- Many drugs approved before 1990 did not include women in drug trials.
- Many drugs do not have pediatric indications.

The good news is that many life-threatening ADEs are also preventable. Before taking any prescription drug or supplement, ask questions and become informed. Pharmacies and supplement vendors all offer patient-based information. You can also check FDA's Medwatch site: <http://www.fda.gov/medwatch/> or a website like Medscape <http://www.medscape.com> for information (note: ask providers to recommend an information source that is evidence based). If you are going to be taking the drug for a long period of time, you might want to search an internet support group site to see what other patients have posted about side effects, efficacy etc, and print out any anecdotal information for your provider(s).

If there is any monitoring, testing or follow-up testing that is required, be sure to get prescripts or standing orders, mark the testing dates on your appointment calendar, and try to make sure

© 2007 - 2008 Prevent Medical Error. All rights reserved. For personal use only. Please share and discuss this information with your licensed treating providers. For multiple copies, please contact Prevent Medical Error for permission. This information is for informational purposes only, and not intended to take the place of your doctor, nurse practitioner, pharmacist or other health care professionals. Please consult your licensed health care provider(s) before making any medical decisions. Patients under 18 years of age should also consult with their parent(s) or guardian before making any health care decisions. If you are having a medical emergency or a suspected medical emergency, please immediately contact your health care provider, call 911, and/or go to your local emergency room. Please refer to Prevent Medical Error's terms of use for additional information.

This information is presented "As is" without any express or implied warranty of any kind. It is not meant to serve as a recommendation or endorsement of any organization or company unless specifically stated as such. The reader will not hold Prevent Medical Error or our sponsors and supporters liable under any circumstances for their use (or misuse) of this information.



A Nonprofit Advancing Best Practices PO Box 247 Portland ME 04112 www.PreventMedicalError.org

that the laboratory sends you and all of your treating physicians the results in advance of your next appointment(s). Determine if, when, and how to follow-up on the prescription; and who should notify other healthcare providers about medication changes, and when and how they will do this.

If you have not already done so, you may want to ask your healthcare providers whether or not they have ever received or hope to receive sponsorship, funding for studies, or any other compensation from any pharmaceutical, device or supplement company so that you can be aware of any potential conflicts-of-interest.

- Precautions:

Before you take any drug or supplement, wash your hands! If a sink is not readily available, use sterile wipes or baby wipes to clean your hands.

To maintain efficacy and safety, drugs need to be shipped, dispensed, and stored properly. Always read the product label and/or insert or ask your pharmacist or doctor about how to store your medication or supplement, and follow the directions. Drugs and supplements should NEVER be exposed to extremes in temperatures or humidity, and should not be used if they have been mishandled or are beyond the discard date.

7. Side-Effects (dates matter)

All drugs and supplements have side effects.

Ask your healthcare providers to work with you regarding potential side-effects, drug/drug and/or drug/supplement interactions BEFORE they prescribe a medication or supplement. Keep a copy of the pharmacy drug information sheet or the drug insert information in your medical binder and/or PDA.

- Important questions that you might want to ask your provider(s) are:
- What type of side-effects should I expect and when should I expect them;

© 2007 - 2008 Prevent Medical Error. All rights reserved. For personal use only. Please share and discuss this information with your licensed treating providers. For multiple copies, please contact Prevent Medical Error for permission. This information is for informational purposes only, and not intended to take the place of your doctor, nurse practitioner, pharmacist or other health care professionals. Please consult your licensed health care provider(s) before making any medical decisions. Patients under 18 years of age should also consult with their parent(s) or guardian before making any health care decisions. If you are having a medical emergency or a suspected medical emergency, please immediately contact your health care provider, call 911, and/or go to your local emergency room. Please refer to Prevent Medical Error's terms of use for additional information.

This information is presented "As is" without any express or implied warranty of any kind. It is not meant to serve as a recommendation or endorsement of any organization or company unless specifically stated as such. The reader will not hold Prevent Medical Error or our sponsors and supporters liable under any circumstances for their use (or misuse) of this information.



A Nonprofit Advancing Best Practices PO Box 247 Portland ME 04112 www.PreventMedicalError.org

- What type of side-effects might indicate a problem and warrant a phone call to the provider; and
- When and whom to call about which side effects.
- Do not rely on pharmacy label discard dates; ask your pharmacy to show you the manufacturer's packaging, and write down the drug batch lot number and actual drug expiration date, or have the pharmacist do this for you and write it down on the receipt. Cross-reference the pharmacy label discard dates with product packaging expiration dates that are stamped on the side of the manufacturer's packaging. You can also ask your pharmacist to write the package expiration date on your pharmacy receipt or prescription bottle. Contact your physician and your pharmacist immediately if there is something amiss with the expiration date, product packaging, or the drug. You can also contact your state board of pharmacy.

- **Precautions:**

Work by the "rule of three"; try never to take more than three things that can cause the same side-effect. If you do take three or more medications and/or supplements that can cause the same side effect, list the side effect on your meds list as a possible interaction that needs to be monitored, and /or as a treatment class that is contraindicated.

8. Generic Drugs and Supplements (an important warning about outsourced manufacturing).

Before having a prescription for a generic drug filled, or before buying a supplement, ask for the country of origin of the drug; i.e. the country where the drug or supplement was MANUFACTURED. Similar to food and other items, increased numbers of supplements, drug components and/or finished generic drugs are currently being subcontracted by American, Canadian and other companies to subcontractors in China and India, or manufactured by one of several fast growing Indian generic drug manufacturers. Some pharmaceutical companies are closing manufacturing plants in well-developed countries and moving manufacturing to India.

© 2007 - 2008 Prevent Medical Error. All rights reserved. For personal use only. Please share and discuss this information with your licensed treating providers. For multiple copies, please contact Prevent Medical Error for permission. This information is for informational purposes only, and not intended to take the place of your doctor, nurse practitioner, pharmacist or other health care professionals. Please consult your licensed health care provider(s) before making any medical decisions. Patients under 18 years of age should also consult with their parent(s) or guardian before making any health care decisions. If you are having a medical emergency or a suspected medical emergency, please immediately contact your health care provider, call 911, and/or go to your local emergency room. Please refer to Prevent Medical Error's terms of use for additional information.

This information is presented "As is" without any express or implied warranty of any kind. It is not meant to serve as a recommendation or endorsement of any organization or company unless specifically stated as such. The reader will not hold Prevent Medical Error or our sponsors and supporters liable under any circumstances for their use (or misuse) of this information.



A Nonprofit Advancing Best Practices PO Box 247 Portland ME 04112 www.PreventMedicalError.org

IMPORTANT GENERIC DRUG SAFETY TIPS:

Have the pharmacist check their on-shelf stock and provide you with the name of generic drug company and the country where the drug was manufactured, and/or the name of any subcontractor, their country of origin and the country where the drug was manufactured.

Ideally, you would like your prescription or supplement to be manufactured in a well-developed country because developed countries have more advanced infrastructure (water, electricity and sewage systems are examples) and distribution networks. They also usually have more effective oversight and regulatory systems in place, and lower documented rates of drug tampering and adulteration. Read vitamin and supplement labels to find out the country of origin and expiration date.

- Precautions:

Different generic drug companies often use different dyes and excipients (drug binders and fillers).

Differences in fillers, dyes, coatings and active product ingredients (APIs) can cause severe and potentially fatal allergic reactions, drug reactions or drug interactions. Generic drug and supplement ingredient differences can also change the way that a drug or supplement is metabolized and render it ineffective or, worse still, toxic. For example, a brand name antibiotic may have a coating, but the generic version may not have the same coating. The generic antibiotic that does not have the same coating may be dissolved and rendered useless by the hydrochloric acid in your stomach, and your infection may only be partially treated, or may take longer to treat. Have your pharmacist and physician "red flag" these manufacturers and/or any problematic ingredients. Promptly report any new symptoms or concerns to your physicians and pharmacist.

IMPORTANT SAFETY TIPS:

- If you have concerns, you or your prescriber can ask your pharmacist check the various generic brand excipients of their shelf stock before they dispense your prescription. Ask them to dispense the generic brand that best suits your needs.

© 2007 - 2008 Prevent Medical Error. All rights reserved. For personal use only. Please share and discuss this information with your licensed treating providers. For multiple copies, please contact Prevent Medical Error for permission. This information is for informational purposes only, and not intended to take the place of your doctor, nurse practitioner, pharmacist or other health care professionals. Please consult your licensed health care provider(s) before making any medical decisions. Patients under 18 years of age should also consult with their parent(s) or guardian before making any health care decisions. If you are having a medical emergency or a suspected medical emergency, please immediately contact your health care provider, call 911, and/or go to your local emergency room. Please refer to Prevent Medical Error's terms of use for additional information.

This information is presented "As is" without any express or implied warranty of any kind. It is not meant to serve as a recommendation or endorsement of any organization or company unless specifically stated as such. The reader will not hold Prevent Medical Error or our sponsors and supporters liable under any circumstances for their use (or misuse) of this information.



A Nonprofit Advancing Best Practices PO Box 247 Portland ME 04112 www.PreventMedicalError.org

- If your prescription has refills, you can ask your prescriber to write down dispense as written - DAW – and/or – Medically Necessary- and the name of their preferred generic drug brand on their prescription, and ask your pharmacist to note this in their records. This can help ensure a more consistent therapeutic outcome.
- If your pharmacist is not able to or not allowed to dispense the preferred generic brand, you can:
 - A. Have your pharmacist contact your prescriber and fill the prescription with a suitable alternative;
 - B. Locate a pharmacy that carries or, if you can wait, is willing to order your preferred generic brand and have the prescription filled at that pharmacy;
 - C. Have your prescriber write a new prescription for the brand name drug;
 - D. Have the generic drug compounded by a compounding pharmacy

PRECAUTIONS FOR THOSE WITH DIABETES, ALLERGIES OR OTHER SENSITIVITIES:

If you are diabetic or have allergies or sensitivities, remember to check drug, supplement and vitamin excipients (binders, coatings and fillers) for anything that might affect glucose levels, trigger an allergic reaction, or trigger a sensitivity reaction. Check the ingredient list of different supplement and vitamin brands before you purchase them.

9. Timing (is everything)

Remember, your pharmacist is one of your health care team members, and they are a great (and in most cases, free) resource so take advantage of their knowledge. Talk to your health care provider(s) to find out whether you should collaboratively devise a schedule for taking your medication at the same time each day, and whether it should or should not be taken with food, for example.

© 2007 - 2008 Prevent Medical Error. All rights reserved. For personal use only. Please share and discuss this information with your licensed treating providers. For multiple copies, please contact Prevent Medical Error for permission. This information is for informational purposes only, and not intended to take the place of your doctor, nurse practitioner, pharmacist or other health care professionals. Please consult your licensed health care provider(s) before making any medical decisions. Patients under 18 years of age should also consult with their parent(s) or guardian before making any health care decisions. If you are having a medical emergency or a suspected medical emergency, please immediately contact your health care provider, call 911, and/or go to your local emergency room. Please refer to Prevent Medical Error's terms of use for additional information.

This information is presented "As is" without any express or implied warranty of any kind. It is not meant to serve as a recommendation or endorsement of any organization or company unless specifically stated as such. The reader will not hold Prevent Medical Error or our sponsors and supporters liable under any circumstances for their use (or misuse) of this information.



A Nonprofit Advancing Best Practices PO Box 247 Portland ME 04112 www.PreventMedicalError.org
10. What to Keep (and what not to keep)

You want to keep a complete, up to date and dated history of your medications.
Try to keep it simple and keep your sense of humor.

What not to keep:

Remember that you can't change an adverse event that has already happened, but you can choose to take steps that minimize negative effects and ensure that even your negative experiences can turn into something positive.

Small strategies can have big impact. Never keep potentially lifesaving information to yourself, share it with your treating providers. If you feel that there is a clear and present danger, you may want to work with your treating providers and their staff or contact your state pharmacy board or bureau of insurance to see if they can alert others to prevention strategies or safety issues.

© 2007 - 2008 Prevent Medical Error. All rights reserved. For personal use only. Please share and discuss this information with your licensed treating providers. For multiple copies, please contact Prevent Medical Error for permission. This information is for informational purposes only, and not intended to take the place of your doctor, nurse practitioner, pharmacist or other health care professionals. Please consult your licensed health care provider(s) before making any medical decisions. Patients under 18 years of age should also consult with their parent(s) or guardian before making any health care decisions. If you are having a medical emergency or a suspected medical emergency, please immediately contact your health care provider, call 911, and/or go to your local emergency room. Please refer to Prevent Medical Error's terms of use for additional information.

This information is presented "As is" without any express or implied warranty of any kind. It is not meant to serve as a recommendation or endorsement of any organization or company unless specifically stated as such. The reader will not hold Prevent Medical Error or our sponsors and supporters liable under any circumstances for their use (or misuse) of this information.