

# Check Your Meds



To Help You Manage All Your Medications

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Washington Health Foundation  
HEALTHIEST STATE IN  
THE NATION CAMPAIGN

www.HealthiestState.org



Taking the right prescription drug offers great benefits. Taking the wrong medication can be very dangerous – millions of Americans are hurt or killed by medication errors. So, make sure you confirm the prescription written by your doctor; compare the medication at the pharmacy; and have the pharmacist call if there are differences.

## ✓ **Confirm.**

Ask your doctor the following questions so you understand the medicine you are being prescribed and can check your medication when picking it up from the pharmacy.

- **Doctor, will you please spell and pronounce the name of the medicine for me?** Write it down and read it back to the doctor so you avoid the common medical mistake of receiving a similar sounding drug at the pharmacy.
- **How is the medicine supposed to help me?**
- **What is it about this particular medicine (brand, amount, etc..) that was important in your decision to prescribe it for me? Why is it better than other options?**
- **When and how often should I take it? Should I plan on getting a refill?**
- **What side effects should I expect? Are there any that should cause concern?**

## ✓ **Compare.**

At the pharmacy, compare the doctor's information with the medication you're given. *If there are any differences, speak up and let the pharmacist know.* Ask the questions on the **Rx Check Worksheet** (see other side) to be sure you're getting the medication that's right for you.

## ✓ **Call.**

If the pharmacy provides you a medication different than the one you and your doctor discussed, it is OK to ask them to call (right now) to make sure it's right.

- If the pharmacist suggests a different medication for medical reasons, ask them to call your doctor to make sure the new medicine fits your treatment plan.
- If the pharmacist suggests a different medication for insurance reasons, ask them to call the insurance company and ask for approval to continue with the medication "as written" by your doctor, before making the switch.
- You have the right to talk to the State Insurance Regulation office if you are not getting the help you need. (1-800-562-6900 in the state of Washington)

## Rx Check Worksheet Prescription #1

Confirm with your Doctor

Compare at the pharmacy

*Correct spelling of medication?*

*Exactly the same* \_\_\_\_\_

*How is the medicine supposed to work?*

*Exactly the same* \_\_\_\_\_

*When and how to take the medicine?*

*Exactly the same* \_\_\_\_\_

*Take with specific food or drink?*

*Exactly the same* \_\_\_\_\_

*Any food, drink, or activity to avoid?*

*Exactly the same* \_\_\_\_\_

## Rx Check Worksheet Prescription #2

*(If you have been prescribed more than two medications, simply use more worksheets)*

Confirm with your Doctor

Compare at the pharmacy

*Correct spelling of medication?*

*Exactly the same* \_\_\_\_\_

*How is the medicine supposed to work?*

*Exactly the same* \_\_\_\_\_

*When and how to take the medicine?*

*Exactly the same* \_\_\_\_\_

*Take with specific food or drink?*

*Exactly the same* \_\_\_\_\_

*Any food, drink, or activity to avoid?*

*Exactly the same* \_\_\_\_\_

## If the medication is not exactly what you and your doctor decided

- The pharmacist should **call your doctor** to if the pharmacist wants to give you a different medication for any reason.
- The pharmacist should **call your insurance company** before switching you to a different medication that the plan prefers. You have the right to ask the health plan to pay for the exact medication your doctor prescribed.
- You should **call the office of the Insurance Commissioner** if you don't feel you're getting the help that you need. In Washington – **1-800-562-6900**