

MISTAKES CAN HAPPEN WITH YOUR MEDICINES

Mistakes can happen with your medicines when you go into and come out of hospital, change wards or see different health professionals in the community. Having the right information about your medicines at all times will help prevent mistakes.

Health professionals need to know about all the medicines you use so they can make the right decisions about your health. Medicines include prescription, over-the-counter, herbal and natural medicines, and come in different forms, such as tablets, lotions, patches and drops.

You and your carer can help prevent medicine mistakes

Keep track of all your medicines with a *Medicines List*. Your doctor, nurse or pharmacist can help you fill it out. Speak up if you're ever unsure about your medicines.



LEAVING HOSPITAL

- ▶ Ask which medicines you should continue using at home and for all changes to be explained.
- ▶ Leave with an up-to-date *Medicines List*.
- ▶ Check the active ingredients of all your medicines to avoid doubling up. Ask your health professional if you're unsure.
- ▶ Show your regular doctor and pharmacist your updated *Medicines List* and hospital discharge information so they can update their records.

HELP PREVENT MEDICINE MISTAKES WITH AN UP-TO-DATE **MEDICINES LIST**

Order, print or download an NPS *Medicines List* from www.nps.org.au/medicineslist or ask your pharmacist. It is also available in other languages and as an iPhone app.



AT HOME/SEEING ANY HEALTH PROFESSIONAL

- ▶ Keep your *Medicines List* up to date.
- ▶ Take your *Medicines List* every time you visit your regular health professional or someone new. If you stop or start a medicine, let them know.
- ▶ Ask your doctor or pharmacist for a medicines review if you have any problems with your medicines.



GOING INTO HOSPITAL

- ▶ Take your *Medicines List* and medicine containers with you and show them to the doctor, nurse or pharmacist.
- ▶ Your medicines should be checked on arrival and when you're moved around the hospital.
- ▶ For your safety, you may be asked questions about your medicines, so answer them honestly.

BE MEDICINEWISE

Find out how at www.nps.org.au/medicinewise

AUSTRALIAN COMMISSION ON SAFETY AND QUALITY IN HEALTH CARE

The role of the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care is to lead and coordinate improvements in safety and quality in health care across Australia.

© Commonwealth of Australia 2012 www.safetyandquality.gov.au



Independent, not-for-profit and evidence based, NPS enables better decisions about medicines and medical tests. We are funded by the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing.

© 2012 National Prescribing Service Limited ABN 61 082 034 393 www.nps.org.au

This information is not intended to take the place of medical advice and you should seek advice from a qualified health professional. Reasonable care is taken to provide accurate information at the date of creation. Where permitted by law, NPS and the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care disclaim all liability (including for negligence) for any loss, damage or injury resulting from reliance on or use of this information.