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# Managing Multiple Medications

University of Maine Center on Aging

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# Managing Multiple Medications



As an older adult you may find yourself with multiple prescriptions to take in one day. Because taking multiple drugs has the potential to be harmful, knowing the side effects and hazards of taking multiple drugs may help you to maintain your health and independence.

## Is it dangerous to take multiple prescriptions?

Many times older adults need multiple prescription medications to manage health problems they are facing. When carefully monitored by a doctor and pharmacist your drug regimen can be valuable to your health and well-being. However, without proper precautions, taking multiple medications can be dangerous and have serious consequences for your health.

## What are the risks of taking multiple medications?



- \* Harmful drug interactions
- \* Increased risk of falls
- \* Increased risk of hospitalization
- \* Risk of taking more or less of a drug than needed which can lead to serious health problems or even death in extreme cases

## Steps you can take to protect your health

- \* Bring in your current medications or list of your medications to your doctor for review at each check-up appointment.
- \* Inform your pharmacist of any medications you are taking and ask about interactions or side effects of taking your medications in combination.
- \* Ask about alternative methods or treatment that could reduce the number of medications you take.
- \* Use medication reminders or pill organizers to keep track of your prescriptions.



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