

Know Your Medications

Mrs. Smith lives in a retirement home where she looks after her own medications. Late last night, she fell on her way to the bathroom. The staff at the home found her confused and were unable to get her up. An ambulance was called and took Mrs. Smith to the local Emergency Department. On arrival, Mrs. Smith was unable to give any information to the emergency staff other than her name.

Her daughter arrived and gave the staff an up-to-date list of her mother's medications which were recently changed. It was discovered that Mrs. Smith had an infection and would have to stay in the hospital for a few days. The staff used the information to create medication orders for her stay.

This fictional scenario shows how things worked out well for Mrs. Smith. Imagine if her daughter did not know anything about her mother's medications and Mrs. Smith was unable to tell anyone. Imagine if Mrs. Smith's medication list was not up-to-date and she was given a medication that she was no longer taking.



At Carleton Place & District Memorial Hospital, we have a process to ensure each patient's medication is reviewed when they arrive, when they go home and at every transition point in-between. We look at what, when and how you take each medication. It's called Medication Reconciliation and it reduces errors such as missing a dose or getting two medications that shouldn't be taken together. It helps us provide the best care possible for every patient.

Here are three tips to remember when coming to the hospital:

- Bring your list of medications and all of your medicine bottles with you. This includes all types of medicine that you take at home, including over-the-counter drugs and herbal medicines. And tell your healthcare provider how you take each medicine.
- Try to use only one Pharmacy. This ensures one complete list and helps your pharmacist monitor for possible drug interactions.
- Visit SafeMedicationUse.ca to learn more. You can download paper lists or a smart phone app to help you keep track of your medications.

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