



Consumers Can Help Prevent Harmful Medication Incidents

SafeMedicationUse.ca Newsletter

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Hospital to Home: Know Your Medications before You Leave



Heading home after a hospital stay can be overwhelming. An important part of going home safely is understanding your medications before you leave the hospital. Your previous medications may have been changed or stopped, or a new medication may have been added during your hospital stay.

SafeMedicationUse.ca received a report from a consumer whose blood pressure medications were changed while she was in the hospital. However, she did not know about all the changes, and neither did her community pharmacist. After a few days of taking her medications, including the ones that were supposed to be stopped, she felt very weak. Her blood pressure dropped so low that she had to be taken back to the hospital in an ambulance.

SafeMedicationUse.ca has the following tips to help you safely return home from the hospital:

- Ask your hospital care team to give you an up-to-date medication list (including nonprescription medications) before you leave. The list should include the name of each medication, the dose, the instructions for use, and the purpose of the medication. Use the [5 Questions to Ask about Your Medications](#) to help you understand any changes.
- Ask a family member or friend to listen in during the discharge meeting and to take notes for you. This can be done in person or over a telephone or video call. Your care team might give you a lot of information before you leave, including about medications that were changed or stopped.
- Ask your care team about bad reactions or allergies that you have experienced with medications and ask that this information be included in your discharge papers.
- Share your medication list (including nonprescription medications) with your family doctor, community pharmacist, and any other members of your care team.
- When filling your new prescriptions, tell your community pharmacist about your recent hospital stay.

Medication safety bulletins contribute to Global Patient Safety Alerts.

This newsletter was developed in collaboration with Best Medicines Coalition and Patients for Patient Safety Canada.

Recommendations are shared with healthcare providers, through the ISMP Canada Safety Bulletin, so that changes can be made together.

This newsletter shares information about safe medication practices, is noncommercial, and is therefore exempt from Canadian anti-spam legislation.