



# Teens: Managing Medication Safely

*Your health and safety are important to us. You can make a difference in your health care by asking questions and being actively involved.*

An important part of managing your healthcare is knowing what medicines you are taking and why you are taking them. Here are some questions you can ask and things you should tell your health care team to better understand your medications.

## When you are prescribed medication:

- **Ask** your care provider the following questions-
  - Why do I need this medicine? How will it help?
  - Is there written information available about the medicine?
  - What does the medicine look like? Is it a liquid or a pill?
  - How do I take this medicine? You should be able to repeat the instructions back to the care provider (they may ask you to “Teach Back” the instructions to them).
  - What side effects should I look for?
- **Tell** your care provider-
  - About allergies and reactions to any medicines you have taken in the past.
  - If you do not understand something or if you have questions.
  - If you have trouble swallowing (sometimes the medicine comes in a liquid or can be given another way).

## When you get the medicine:

- Check the label for your name, the correct medicine name, amount, and directions to make sure it matches what your care provider prescribed.
- Ask your care provider or pharmacist if you can cut, crush, or put medicines in food. Some medicines may not work or may be harmful if cut or crushed.
- Take the medicine exactly as prescribed. Contact your care provider right away if there is anything that gets in the way of taking your medicine as prescribed.

## At your visits:

- Always bring a list of all of the medicines that you are taking. You can keep a list on your phone, take a picture of the prescription label(s), or use a medication app to keep track.
- Let your doctor(s) know if you haven’t been able to take any of your medicines as prescribed. They will want to help you problem-solve, explore potential alternatives, and discuss next steps.

**Contact your care provider if you have any medicine-related questions or concerns.**