

Top 10 Medications Terms You Must Know



Reference:
Medication Use Safety Training (MUST) for Seniors,
“10 Terms You Must Know”, 2011 NCPIE.

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Side Effects

Symptoms or feelings you get when you take a drug that are beyond the drug's intended effects. Side effects are bothersome (for example, dizziness, nausea, confusion) and can be mild or serious. You should report any side effects to your healthcare professional.

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Generics

Copies of brand-name drugs that have the same purpose, strength, safety, and other characteristics of brand-name drugs, but are manufactured by a different company. Generics are required by the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to meet the same quality standards as brand-name drugs and generally cost significantly less money.

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Drug Interactions

When a drug interacts with another drug, condition, food, or alcohol and changes the way the drug acts in the body.

- **Drug-Drug Interactions**
- **Drug-Condition Interactions**
- **Drug-Food Interactions**
- **Drug-Alcohol Interactions**

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Beers (List) Criteria

A list of medications that are generally considered inappropriate or unsafe for people over age 65.



Click on the paperclip button for a link to the Beers criteria.

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Formulary

Typically, a list of prescription drugs that your drug insurance plan will pay for. Formulary can also refer to a list of drugs in other contexts; for example, a hospital's formulary is a list of drugs the hospital pharmacy stocks.

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Non-Medical Use of Prescription Drugs

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Medication Adherence

Faithfully sticking to the medical treatment regime your doctor prescribes, even without that doctor's close supervision.

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Over Use

Taking more medication than is prescribed or recommended by the healthcare professional or label. This often happens by accident. For example, maybe you forgot you took it in the morning, so you take it again.

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Under Use

Taking less medication than prescribed or recommended, or missing or skipping doses. (This can also include tablet/pill splitting. Always check with your healthcare professional first!)

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Polypharmacy

When a person takes multiple prescription and/or over-the-counter (OTC) medicines. Polypharmacy is common among older adults and can lead to problems such as harmful drug interactions, medication confusion and high costs.

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