

Having a Conversation with Your Doctor about Medication

Seeing more than one doctor for different health reasons can often lead to overmedication, as doctors don't always know what the other has prescribe to a patient. That's where you become more involved in your care. Before you talk to your doctor and ask yourself these questions:

Step 1: Look at your medicines.

For each question, first write down your number, then check green or yellow box that goes with it.

How many do you take every day?

Include prescriptions, over-the-counter medicine, supplements and vitamins. Each pill bottle or package — like an inhaler or tube — counts as one medicine.

Fewer than 5 5 or more

How many times a day do you take medicine?

Once or twice Three or more

How many different types of medicine do you take?

Examples: pills, creams, eye drops, inhalers, shots

1 or 2 3 or more

How many of your medicines have special directions?

Examples: take at bedtime, take on an empty stomach, take different doses on different days

0 or 1 2 or more

Step 2: Check your score

Add up the numbers you wrote above

Did you check any yellow boxes? Yes No

Step 3: Talk to your doctor

Is the number you wrote in Step 2 more than eight (8) OR did you answer “yes” in Step 2? If so, ask your doctor if you still need all of your medicines or if there is a way to make your medicine simpler to take.

***DO NOT make any changes to your medicines without first talking to your doctor.**

References: JAMA. 2015;314(17):1818-1831 | Annals of Pharmacotherapy 2014, Vol. 48(1) 26-32. | Clin Ther. 2001 Aug;23(8):1296-310