

Medicine taking tips

- Ask your doctor and pharmacist to help you maintain an accurate list of **ALL** your medicines, such as a **MediList**, including doses and when to take them.
- Give a spare copy of your medicines list to someone who can be contacted in case of a medical emergency.
- Always read the consumer medicines information provided with the medicine.

For more help with your medicines ask your doctor for a Home Medicines Review (HMR)

Questions to ask when starting a new medicine:

- 1 Can I have a consumer medicines information leaflet (CMI)?
- 2 What are the common side effects?
- 3 How often do the side effects affect people like me (people the same age or with similar health concerns as me)?
- 4 Are the side effects temporary or long lasting?
- 5 Are there any serious side effects I should look for and what should I do if I get them?

For more information regarding side effects from medicines you can contact the **Medicines Line** on **1300 633 424**.

MediLists are available from most pharmacies

Veterans' MATES

www.dva.gov.au/health/veteransmates

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What you need to know about medicines and getting older

Get the best from your medicines





how

How does **getting older** affect my medicines?

As you age, your body handles medicines differently.

For example:

- you may be more prone to the unwanted effects of medicines;
- the medicine may be affecting a part of your body it is not intended for;
- medicines that you have tolerated well in the past may start to give you side effects.



what

What is a **side effect**?

Side effects are also called unwanted effects.

They are undesirable effects from medicines, even though you may be taking your medicines correctly.

Examples

Some common side effects in the elderly are:

- light headedness
- drowsiness
- falls
- difficulty thinking clearly
- problems with your bladder or bowels

These side effects may be temporary or long lasting.

They may be related to the amount of medicine you are taking and will stop if the doctor changes the dose of your medicine.

They may only stop if the doctor stops or changes your medicine.



How can side effects affect my **lifestyle**?

- You may be more likely to fall and injure yourself.
- You may not be able to do things you enjoy such as sport or crafts.
- Trouble with concentrating may affect your driving.
- Problems with toileting may interrupt your sleep.

What should I do if I think my medicine is causing side effects?

- Take a list of all your medicines and this brochure and speak to your doctor.
- Even if you are unsure your medicines are causing the side effect, tell your doctor anyway.
- Ask your doctor to review all your medicines including those you buy from the chemist, health food shop or supermarket.

