

# Medicines

## MEDICINES AND OLDER ADULTS

Most older adults take medicines. This includes over-the-counter and prescription drugs. Learn how to take them in a way that promotes good health.

## THE FOOD-MEDICINE CONNECTION

Food and medicines play a role in good health. But when taken together, they may affect each other.

### Medicines May Affect Food Intake.

- Medicines may affect the appetite.
- Medicines may change the taste or smell of foods.
- Medicines may cause nausea or vomiting.
- Some medicines should be taken on an empty stomach. Others should be taken with food.
- It may be harmful to drink alcohol while taking some medicines.

### Foods May Affect How Medicines Work.

- Some foods affect the way the body uses medicines.
- Some foods may have bad effects when combined with certain medicines.



## ASK YOUR HEALTH CARE PROVIDER FOR SPECIFIC ADVICE

**Take medicines as prescribed.**

**Ask your doctor or pharmacist:**

- What time of day to take the medicines.
- If you should stop eating any foods when taking them.
- If you need any nutrient supplements while taking medicines.
- What possible side effects to expect.
- If the dose of long-term drugs should be adjusted over time.



**Tell the doctor and pharmacist about:**

- All the medicines that you take (over-the-counter and prescription drugs).
- Any dietary supplements that you take.
- Any symptoms that you have after eating certain foods.

**Have your medicines put in large bottles that are easy to open.**

Make sure the labels are easy to read.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

**Food and Drug Administration (FDA)**

Medications and Older People

Website: [www.pueblo.gsa.gov/cic\\_text/health/meds4old/697\\_old.html](http://www.pueblo.gsa.gov/cic_text/health/meds4old/697_old.html)