

**LEARN TO**  
**BeMedicine**  
**Smart**   
National Council on  
Patient Information and Education

**10 Important Questions to Help You “Be Medicine Smart”**

These questions help you get the information you need to use medicines appropriately. Be sure to ask your doctor, physician assistant, nurse practitioner, and pharmacist these questions whenever medications are part of your treatment plan.

1. What is the name of the medicine and what is it for? Is this the brand name or the generic name?
2. Is a generic version of this medicine available?
3. How and when do I take it - and for how long?
4. What foods, drinks, other medicines, dietary supplements, or activities should I avoid while taking this medicine?
5. When should I expect the medicine to begin to work, and how will I know if it is working? Are there any tests required with this medicine (for example, to check liver or kidney function)?
6. Are there any side effects, what are they, and what do I do if they occur?
7. Will this medicine work safely with the other prescription and nonprescription medicines I am taking? Will it work safely with any dietary / herbal supplements I am taking?
8. Do I need to get a refill? When?
9. How should I store this medicine?
10. Is there any written information available about the medicine? (Is it available in large print or a language other than English?)

**And remember, when medicines are prescribed, tell your healthcare professionals:**

- All of your medical conditions and the names of doctors providing treatment
- The names of all medicines and other products you are taking, including:
  - \* Prescription and nonprescription medicines
  - \* Dietary supplements / herbal remedies, vitamins or minerals
  - \* Laxatives
  - \* Pain relievers
  - \* Sleeping aids
- Any problems you are having with your medicines;
- The medicines to which you are allergic;
- If you are, or might be pregnant.

**Working together to promote safe medicine use**

**Visit: [bemedicinesmart.org](http://bemedicinesmart.org)**

**EDUCATE before**  
**YOU MEDICATE**  
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The NCPIE  
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