



## Caring for Others: Tips for Medicines and Devices

Do you help care for a loved one at home or check on them out of town? You want to help your loved ones stay as healthy as they can be. But it can be hard to manage their medicines and medical devices. Changes in their treatment can also be a challenge.

Use these four (4) tips for how you, your loved one, and their healthcare provider can create a plan for using medicines wisely.

1. Get the Facts
2. Follow Directions
3. Stay Organized
4. Be Prepared

# FDA Office of Women's Health

## Tips for Creating a Care Plan

### 1. GET THE FACTS

You need to know what each medicine is for and how it should be taken. You also need to know how each device works. **When you go to the doctor, you or your loved one should ask:**

- What is the name of the medicine?
- How much medicine should your loved one take and when should they take it?
- What are the side effects or special warnings?
- What can be done if your loved one has problems taking or tolerating their medicine?
- How do we safely get rid of old or unused medicine and devices?

### 2. FOLLOW DIRECTIONS

Taking too much or too little medicine can make your loved one very sick. Use the medicines and devices as directed. **Before you start:**



Ask a healthcare provider for help.



Use the right tool. Give the right amount.



Read the labeling and other information.



Read the directions on how to clean your device. You should not use household cleaners on some devices.

### 3. STAY ORGANIZED

Simple steps can help your loved one stay safe and stick to their medication routine. They can also help make your work easier.



Keep a list of medicines.



Set reminders.



Lock medicines up and away.

Keep track of any changes in your loved one's health. Report problems to their healthcare provider. You can report problems with medicines to FDA at [www.fda.gov/MedWatch/Report](http://www.fda.gov/MedWatch/Report).

### 4. BE PREPARED

Don't be caught off guard. Make a plan for emergencies.

- Pack a kit with medical supplies and batteries. Put the kit in a place that is easy for your loved one to access.
- Include a copy of your loved one's medicine list and other medical information in the kit.
- Ask how to handle medicines or devices affected by flood water or heat.
- Tell the electric company and fire department if there is a medical device that needs power in your loved one's home.

