

## Discharge advice

- Leave the hospital with a Medication Profile from the pharmacy
- If you have trouble remembering to take your medications, arrange for your pharmacy to give you blister packs
- Take the medications only as prescribed. Do not alter the dose or frequency unless you have discussed this with your doctor.

## Resources

**Medicines Line:** 1300 633 424

A telephone service providing consumers with information on prescription, over-the-counter and complementary medicines.

**Consumer Medicines Information:**

[www.tga.gov.au/medicines-medical-devices](http://www.tga.gov.au/medicines-medical-devices)

**Icarus Project:**

Free consumer-written guide to safely reducing or stopping medications:

[www.fireweedcollective.org/publication/harm-reduction-guide-to-coming-off-psychiatric-drugs](http://www.fireweedcollective.org/publication/harm-reduction-guide-to-coming-off-psychiatric-drugs)



# Medication Safety

Information for patients, carers,  
family and support persons



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Community  
of Care

 **The Melbourne Clinic**  
by Healthscope

## Medication safety

Medications may be an important part of your treatment. Reducing error and harm from medicines is a priority and we constantly try to improve systems to ensure you receive the correct medication and dose at the correct time as per the prescription written by your admitting doctor.

## Safe administration of medications

### Things we do to ensure this:

- Check your ID band when your medicines are administered.
- Reconcile your medications with other agencies (e.g. GP, psychiatrist, family and yourself) on admission and discharge.
- On discharge we will provide you with a comprehensive list of your medications, doses and times to be taken.
- Ongoing training for staff.

### Things you can do:

- On admission, present all medications you brought with you to your nurse.
- Bring a list of medications from your GP.
- Be aware of what medicines you are taking, doses and what times.
- Wear your ID band.

## Monitoring the effects of the medication

Medications can have both desired and undesired side-effects. The ideal is to find medications that work well for you with minimal side effects.

To achieve this, your admitting doctor may change your medications and/or doses. Often the desired effect of these can be seen after a few weeks and it may take time to find the right combination of medication and dosage for you.

Side effects are variable for every person. Some people will experience no side effects, while others may experience serious and debilitating side effects. Please report any side effects to your doctor or nurse.

## PRNs

The term PRN comes from the Latin term for *Pro Re Nata*, which means “in the circumstances”. They are medications that you take when you need them, rather than on a regular basis.

Your doctor will prescribe an indication of when a PRN may be needed, but these are encouraged to be taken as a second line strategy, after utilising the coping methods you are developing during your stay. A nurse must assess you prior to dispensing any PRN.

## What if I am not happy with the medications I am on?

You have the right to collaborate on your treatment plan and to make informed choices. If you feel that the medications aren't working or are having an adverse effect on you, you can:

- Consult with your doctor
- Ask for further information from your contact nurses or ask to speak with a pharmacist.

## Stopping medications

Stopping psychiatric medications can cause discontinuation symptoms (withdrawal effects). It is important you take the medications as prescribed by your doctor. If you decide with your doctor to cease a medication they will provide guidance and supervision of a gradual withdrawal.

