

# Heart Failure Program

Topics

Medication Tips from a Pharmacist



carefor you

# Top 10 Tips from a Pharmacist

## 1. Use 1 pharmacy

- This way your pharmacist can make sure there are no drug interactions between medications ordered by different doctors.
- Your pharmacist can make safe recommendations on Over The Counter (OTC) medications.

## 2. Order refills before you run out

- Order refills 7 days before you run out. This ensures the pharmacy can obtain the refill from the doctor and order the medication.
- This is especially important over the weekends, holidays, or if you are traveling.
- Most pharmacies offer an “auto-refill” service which can help you.

### 3. Know the names of the medications you take and why you are taking them

- The manufacturer of the medication may change, and the colors/sizes of the pills may look different.

### 4. Keep a current medication list and bring to every appointment

- This prevents duplicate prescribing and drug interactions.
- Include any vitamins, supplements, and/or Over the Counter (OTC) medications you take.
- Point out any recent changes.

## MEDICATION LIST

Patient's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Doctor's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

PRESCRIBED MEDICATION:				
MEDICATION NAME(s)	PURPOSE	DESCRIPTION	DOSAGE	FREQUENCY
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				
5.				
6.				
7.				
8.				
9.				

## **5. 90-day supplies may be more convenient for you**

- 90-day supplies can cut down on the number of trips you make to the pharmacy.
- Sometimes 90-day supplies save you money too!
- This is a great option for long term medications.
- Ask your pharmacist about 90 days!

## **6. Use the pharmacy technology if possible**

- Most pharmacies have an App you can use to keep track of your medications, request refills, check the copay, and confirm if your refill is ready for pick up.
- With some Apps, all you do is scan the barcode on your bottle for a refill!



- **7. Do not flush your medications down the sink or toilet!**
  - There are multiple sites in WNY to take unwanted prescription and Over the Counter medications for disposal. Some pharmacies even have drop boxes!
  - If unable to use a disposal site, you can mix unwanted medications with kitty litter or used coffee grounds and then throw out in a hard plastic container.
  - Find a drug disposal site near you here: [Home - Drug Takeback Program - New York \(medtakebacknewyork.org\)](https://www.medtakebacknewyork.org)
- **8. Do not throw used sharps in the regular garbage**
  - This includes syringes, autoinjectors, pre-filled syringes, and pen needles.
  - Sharps containers can be purchased at most pharmacies.
  - You can use a durable plastic container (such as an empty laundry detergent bottle.)
  - Find a sharps disposal site near you here: [State Search - Safe Needle Disposal - Where to Dispose of Syringes](#)

## **9. Never put your medications in “checked” luggage**

- Always bring your medications when you travel, they should be #1 on your packing list!
- Keep your medications in your personal item or carry-on incase of luggage delays or if your luggage is lost.

## **10. Ask questions!**

- When in doubt, ASK! Ask your doctor, ask your pharmacist, ask your nurse!

# Questions to ask your Health Care Provider when you are prescribed a new medication

- Why do I need this medication?
- What can I expect from taking this medication?
- What are the potential side effects and what do I do if I experience them?
- How long do I take this medication?
- Is there a less expensive medication that would work as well?
- Can I stop taking any of my other medications?
- What do I do if I miss a dose?

# Taking Medications

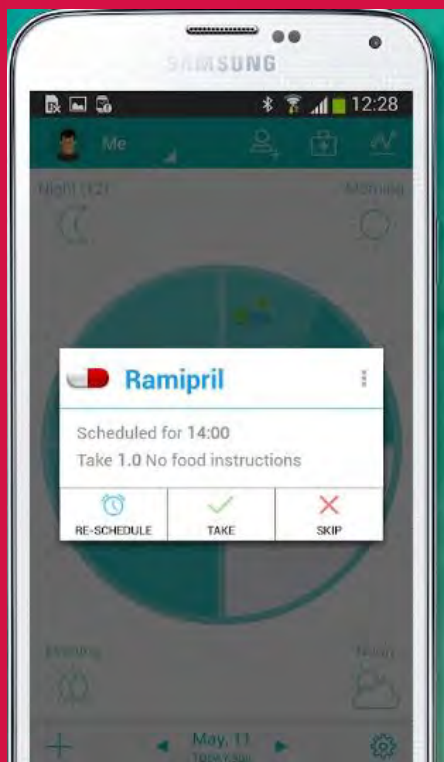
- It is important to follow the directions for how to take medications as directed by your doctor or pharmacist.
- Some medications work best when taken at certain times of the day.
- Some work best when taken with food or on an empty stomach.
- Following the correct way to take medications will ensure they work the way they are supposed to.
- Not sure if you are taking your medication correctly? Ask your pharmacist!





## Helpful tips for remembering your medications

- “Habit-stack”
  - Take medications at the same time you are already doing a daily task; for example, take your morning medications after you brush your teeth.
- Use a pill box
  - There are many different options you can purchase to fit your needs.
- There’s an App for that!
  - Apps can help you stay organized and send reminders to take your medications throughout the day!
  - Some examples are: Medisafe Medication Management, Round Health, Pill Reminder-All in One, and many more!!)
  - There’s also an App on the Apple Watch.



## In this presentation you learned:

- ✓ Top 10 medication tips
- ✓ Questions to ask your doctor and/or pharmacist about your medications
- ✓ How to take your medications
- ✓ Tips for remembering to take your medications



# We're Here For You

- To discuss any of the information contained in this presentation, contact your Care For You Heart Failure Program Pharmacist.
- Thank you for letting us be a part of your Healthcare Team.