

# Manage Your Medications Effectively & Avoid Significant Risks

» BY ALICE PAXTON

Medication management is the process of ensuring that your medications are taken safely, effectively and on schedule, with guidance from your healthcare providers. This maximizes the benefits to you and minimizes the risks.

There are significant risks when you're not managing your medications. Trying to save money by cutting a pill in half or sharing your medicine with your partner involves risks. It's important to take your medications exactly as prescribed by your doctors. It's also important not to take new medications or supplements you discover without discussing them with your doctor. They can negate the benefits of the medications you are already taking and introduce risks.

It's critical to take your medications as prescribed. Don't crush or break pills or open capsules without asking your doctor or pharmacist first. Doing so can change how your medication works or its effectiveness.

When you take your medications at the proper dosage at the right time, you have

a 100% chance that your medication will do what it's prescribed to do. This also lowers the possibility of unwanted side effects.



Alice Paxton

Are you storing your medication at the right temperature and humidity? Bathrooms are often too humid for medications. It's important to read and follow the storage instructions carefully.

Keeping medications secure and out of reach of children and pets is a safety procedure everyone should follow. Some medications can be fatal to children and pets if ingested.

## TOOLS TO HELP YOU WITH MEDICATION MANAGEMENT

There are tools that can help you manage your medications properly and increase your independence in the process:

- Use timers, alarms or smartphone apps for your medication reminders.
- Pill organizers, found at any pharmacy, can help you take your medications properly. These organizers are available with daily, weekly or even monthly packs. In addition, there are organizers with a morning, noon



It's best to keep medications that aren't currently in your pillbox in their original bottles or containers.

and evening compartment for your medications. Many of these are clear so you can see at a glance if you've taken your medication at the time you should have.

Your pharmacist is also a valuable resource and tool. Whenever possible, get all your prescriptions at the same pharmacy. When you use one pharmacy, all of

your medication records are in one place. This helps your pharmacist protect you from drug interactions and makes getting your prescription refills simpler. It also enables the pharmacist to evaluate your risk and work with your doctor to avoid potential problems. Your pharmacist

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NORTHERN REGION



## Northern Virginia Senior Community Services Employment Program (SCSEP)

SCSEP provides temporary community service training opportunities to older Americans to prepare them for jobs in their community. SCSEP participants ages 55+ who are unemployed and meet financial guidelines, can train up to 29 hours a week, and are paid directly by SCSEP.

Participants are placed in a wide variety of community service training assignments at nonprofit and public facilities. This on-the-job training experience can then be used as a bridge to find employment opportunities outside of the program.



### FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:

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## Fall Prevention: An Educational Seminar

Thursday, May 21  
1:00 p.m.

Light refreshments will be served.

Falls are the leading cause of injury among seniors. Find out how to prevent them during our expert-led seminar.

- Why fall prevention matters
- Eye-opening facts and risks
- Simple prevention strategies
- Helpful safety resources



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