

Recommendations by the LWVSD FDA Committee

- ✓ Carry an Emergency Medical Card that has details on your medical condition, blood type, short version of your advance healthcare directives with your signature and date, allergies, medications, brief medical history and problems, list of people to notify in case of an emergency, and medical insurance. You can type it up and shrink it, then laminate it.
- ✓ Read the background information that comes with new medicines because it contains all side effects reported to the FDA.
- ✓ Select a pharmacy which has all of your drug prescriptions and where the pharmacist can monitor your medications, especially doses and potential side effects. When new medications are prescribed, discuss with the pharmacist to make sure they will not interact with nor duplicate other medications you are already taking.
- ✓ A drug should be prescribed for a specific diagnosis and for a specific time period.
- ✓ It is your responsibility to know the purposes of all the medications you are on and to keep your primary physician informed of any side effects you are experiencing. Consult with your physician if you wish to modify your dose or discontinue a medication. Let him/her know if a specialist wishes to change your medication regime in any way. Review your medications periodically with your doctor to determine whether any can be discontinued or prescribed at a lower dose.
- ✓ When receiving a refill for a prescription and it appears to be a different size, shape, or color, verify the change with your pharmacist.
- ✓ Just because a medication seems to be effective on one person with a similar diagnosis, it does not mean it will help you. DO NOT take a medication because a friend recommends it or you saw an ad on TV. Always discuss changes with your doctor or pharmacist first.
- ✓ Research new medicine or medical devices on the Internet before you take them and seek answers to your questions with your M.D. and pharmacist. Be sure to ask if it is off-label. The FDA's reports are found at www.fda.gov/forconsumers/consumerupdates or 1-888-463-6332 (1-888-INFOFDA). Consumer Reports' Best Buy Drugs at www.consumerreports.org/health/best-buy-drugs is another good source of information.



FDA Study Committee:

Beryl Flom,
Penny Adler,
Debra Blum,
Jean Willson,
Cris Hagaman,
Shirley Walkoe,
Cathy O'Leary Carey