

WHEN IS IT TOO MUCH? MANAGING MOM AND DAD'S MEDICATIONS

It's important to know as much as possible about the medicines your loved ones are taking. Here are some examples of questions you might ask the doctor or pharmacist.

WHAT CAN YOU TELL US ABOUT THIS MEDICINE?

- What is this medicine treating?
- What will the medicine do? (For example, lower blood pressure.)
- How will we know that this medicine is working? How long will it take before we notice anything?
- What is the next step if this medicine doesn't work?
- Will they need any tests while on this medicine?
- How much does the medicine cost?
- Is an older or less expensive generic version available? Will it work for them?

WHY ARE THEY TAKING IT?

- Why is this the right medicine for them?
- Is there something they can do instead of taking this medicine?
- Is there a medicine that could be better for them?
- Can they start with a prescription for just a few days to make sure the medicine agrees with them?

WHEN AND HOW DO THEY TAKE IT?

- How is the medicine taken? (For example, by mouth [orally] or through a skin patch.)
- How long will they have to take it? What if they begin to feel better?
- What amount do they take each time (i.e., dose)?

- How often should it be taken? (For example, 3 times a day.)
- When should they take it? (For example, early, late, morning, evening, before bed, once a day, any other instructions.)
- What if they miss a dose? Should they take 2 doses the next time or should they take the missed dose right away?

WHAT ABOUT FOOD AND DRINK?

- Should they take this medicine with or without food or water?
- How long before or after eating should they take it? Does it matter?
- Should they avoid any food or drink when I take it?
- Is it okay to drink alcohol while taking this medicine?
- Should they avoid certain activities or other medicines while taking it?

WHAT ABOUT SIDE EFFECTS AND INTERACTIONS?

- What side effects can we expect, and how soon might they appear?
- Will they go away on their own? How long will it take? Can I do anything to prevent or manage them?
- When should we call about side effects?
- Do any of the medicines cause a bad reaction with another one or interact with another medical condition?

WHAT ELSE DO WE NEED TO KNOW?

- Can they take this medicine at the same time as other medicines?
- How do we store this medicine? Do we need to put it in the refrigerator?
- If they have trouble swallowing, can we split the pill or crush it in food or drink?



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