



# You Can!

## Manage your Medications Safely



As we age, the need to take more and different kinds of medications tends to increase. Also, growing older means that our bodies respond differently to alcohol and medication than when we were younger.

To guard against potential problems with medicines, become knowledgeable about your medication and how it makes you feel.

- Read the labels of your medications carefully, and follow the directions.
- Look for pictures or statements on your prescriptions and pill bottles that tell you not to drink alcohol while taking the particular medication. If you are taking medications for sleeping, pain, anxiety or depression, *it is unsafe to drink alcohol.*



- Talk to your health care professional (including your pharmacist) about all medications you take, including prescription, over-the-counter, and dietary supplements, vitamins, and herbals.
- Tell your doctor about any food or medicine allergies you have.
- Keep track of side effects, and let your doctor know immediately about any unexpected symptoms or changes in the way you feel. Memory trouble, loss of coordination (falls), changes in sleep habits, irritability, sadness, or difficulty in concentrating are **not** a normal part of aging, and may indicate a problem with medication and/or alcohol.
- Go through your medicine cabinet at least once a year and get rid of old or expired medicines.
- Have all your medicine reviewed by your doctor at least once a year.

Source: <https://www.samhsa.gov>

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