

MEDICINES and BALANCE



Manage your medicines to help you stay on your feet

It is important for everyone to know what medicines they are taking and why. Taking your medicines correctly, when combined with physical activity, will help you to sleep better, stay steady, be independent and enjoy life.

Some medicines can affect your balance

For some people, medicines that are taken for sleeping problems, stress and anxiety, high blood pressure or heart problems can affect balance and increase the risk of falling.

You need to take notice of any side effects from your medicines.

Side effects are unwanted effects from the drug, such as:

- > feeling drowsy
- > feeling confused
- > feeling dizzy
- > feeling unsteady
- > being clumsy
- > having blurred vision.

Take particular notice when there has been a change in your medicines, you have a new combination of medicines or a different dosage. If you notice side effects from your medicines, talk to your doctor or pharmacist. Simple changes may solve them.



What can you do?

- > Keep an up to date list of medicines (all prescribed and over the counter medicines). Take this list to any health appointment.
- > Only take your own prescribed medicines as directed.
- > Check the medicine label. It may advise 'not to be taken with alcohol'.
- > If your doctor prescribes new medicines, ask about the possible side effects.
- > Ask for the Consumer Medication Information leaflets from your doctor or pharmacist. They contain easy to understand information about your medicine.
- > Consider using a medicine organiser (pill box) to keep track of when to take your medicines. Ask a pharmacist or doctor about these.
- > If your dose has changed, or the medicine is out of date, return them to your pharmacy.



Who can help you?

> Your Doctor.

Talk to your doctor about:

- your medicines and their side effects
- alternatives to some medicines, for example, exercise can help to reduce anxiety and help with sleeping
- changing or stopping any of your medicines
- your doctor can refer you to have a Home Medicine Review. This is a free service where a pharmacist comes to your home to talk about all your medicines with you.

> Pharmacists can tell you about your medicine, how to take it and any side effects.

> **NPS Medicines Line:** 1300 633 424 (1300 MEDICINE) or www.nps.org.au/consumers

> **Health Direct:** 1800 022 222

> **Adverse Medicines Events (AME):** 1300 134 237

For more information

Adelaide area: Call 1300 0 FALLS (1300 0 32557) for information about falls prevention services that are close to you.

Country SA: Please contact your local health service for information about services close to you. You can also email the Country Health Falls Prevention coordinator at Health.CHSAFallsPreventionProject@health.sa.gov.au

www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/falls

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This document has been reviewed and endorsed by SA Health PwC&CAG* for consumers and the community, March 2015.

*SA Health Partnering with Consumers and Community Advisory Group



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