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your medicines

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## 8 REASONS FOR HAVING A HOME MEDICINES REVIEW

Having a Home Medicines Review can help to make sure you are getting the best from your medicines. Your doctor and a specially trained pharmacist will work as a team, answer any questions you may have and give you confidence in your medicines.

**Here are 8 good reasons for having a Home Medicines Review:**



### ***1. You have started a new medicine***

To avoid medicine-related problems, there are a few things you need to know when you start a new medicine. Having a Home Medicines Review will help you to understand your new medicine better. The pharmacist will spend time with you and give you information such as:

- what the medicine is for
- how the medicine will help you
- how long you need to take it for
- special instructions for taking the medicine.



***“The lady who did the review was very helpful and gave me a better understanding of my tablets.”***

Home Medicines Review recipient

## **2. You have recently been in hospital**

There may have been changes made to your medicines while you were in hospital. During a Home Medicines Review, the pharmacist can help to make sure you are using the medicines your doctor intended, check if you may no longer need some medicines, and help keep your doctor informed about any of these changes. The pharmacist will also check that you are not doubling up on any of your medicines. This can be easy to do as medicines with the same active ingredient can have different brand names. For further information about the active ingredient, see the NPS – Better choices, Better health website ([www.nps.org.au/brandchoices](http://www.nps.org.au/brandchoices)). A brochure may be available from your local pharmacy.

## **3. You would like help to keep track of your medicines**

Sometimes taking medicines can be confusing. It can be hard to remember if you have taken them at the right time. At the Home Medicines Review, a pharmacist will go through all of your medicines with you. They will give you an updated list of your medicines and advice on how to manage them. The pharmacist can also see if you would benefit from a Dose Administration Aid (DAA), which the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) provides free to eligible veterans.

## **4. You would like to make sure you are taking all of your medicines correctly**

Each medicine you take can have different instructions. For example, some need to be taken with or without food or at a certain time of day, and you may need to take certain steps if you miss a dose. During a Home Medicines Review, the pharmacist can give you advice about what to do if you miss a dose and give you practical tips for how to use your medicines, such as how to use eye drops or inhalers.

## **5. You are concerned that your medicines are causing side effects**

All medicines have possible side effects: some are very common and may go away with time; some are more serious and may require you to change your medicine or lower the dose. During a Home Medicines Review, the pharmacist can help you learn about possible side effects and what you should do if they occur. They can also help to identify if any of your medicines are causing side effects and let your doctor know about them.





*“It’s good for people who are in my age group to get time to talk about their tablets so we take them at the right time.”* Home Medicines Review recipient



**6. You are cared for by more than one doctor**

You may be prescribed medicines from a number of different doctors and/or other health professionals. During a Home Medicines Review, the pharmacist can take a look at all of these medicines, ensure that they are all OK to take together, and give you and your doctor an up-to-date list of them.



**7. You would like to know which of your medicines are OK to take together**

Some medicines affect each other and shouldn’t be taken together. This includes both prescription and non-prescription medicines, bought from a health food shop, supermarket or pharmacy. Certain foods or drinks (including alcohol) can also affect some medicines. Having a Home Medicines Review can help you find out if all your medicines are OK to take together.



**8. You would like advice on how to store and dispose of your medicines**

Some medicines need to be stored at a certain temperature or may no longer work if exposed to heat or sunlight. During a Home Medicines Review, the pharmacist can give you tips about how to store your medicines. They can also help you to safely dispose of unwanted or expired medicines.

If you are taking medicines, talk to your doctor about having a Home Medicines Review. You may wish to bring this brochure with you and discuss what you would like to find out about your medicines.

## How does a **Home Medicines Review** work?

A Home Medicines Review is funded by the Australian Government to help people get the best from their medicines. The Home Medicines Review will be conducted by a specially trained pharmacist; this may be your usual pharmacist or another pharmacist. This is how it works:

1

### **Step 1**

You, a family member, carer, nurse, pharmacist or your doctor may suggest a Home Medicines Review.

If you and your doctor agree that the review may be useful for you, your doctor will write a referral for this service. Your doctor will discuss with you where you would like the referral to be sent. The referral letter will include details of your medicines and medical history.

2

### **Step 2**

The pharmacist who will conduct the Home Medicines Review will contact you. The Home Medicines Review will be arranged at a convenient time for you at a place of your choice, most commonly your own home.

If you wish, please have a family member, friend or carer present.

3

### **Step 3**

The pharmacist will visit you and talk with you about your medicines and answer your questions.

4

### **Step 4**

Following the visit, the pharmacist will send the information about the Home Medicines Review to your doctor.

5

### **Step 5**

Make an appointment with your doctor after the Home Medicines Review. Your doctor will talk to you about any changes to your medicines that might be needed and can also give you a written Medication Management Plan. Your doctor may also give a copy of the plan to your preferred community pharmacy.