



5 Moments for Medication Safety



Remember **STARS**

-  Starting ✓
-  Taking ✓
-  Adding ✓
-  Reviewing ✓
-  Stopping ✓



About 5 Moments for Medication Safety



The original '5 Moments for Medication Safety' tool was developed by the World Health Organization to help make using medications safer. Following consultation with patients and carers, the tool has been adapted for use throughout Northern Ireland.

Purpose

- To encourage patients to get involved in their care and communicate openly with health professionals.
- To highlight the five main moments when patients and their carers can reduce the risk of harm related to medications.

Who can use it?

- Patients, families and carers can use the tool with support from health professionals.
- Health professionals can use the tool to introduce it to patients, families and carers and to encourage and support them to use it.

Using the tool

Health professionals can help answer your questions about your medications.

- Use the questions in each of the five moments as a guide to help you ask health professionals important questions about your medications.
- Use the tool before, during and after your healthcare appointments.
- Bring the tool to your healthcare appointments. Have it with you:
 - during visits to doctors, nurses, pharmacists or dentists
 - when you are admitted to, or discharged from healthcare facilities
 - when you are referred to, or transferred between, healthcare facilities, and
 - while you are receiving treatment or care at home.
- Use the notes sections to record any questions you want to ask a health professional and any new information you are given.
- Keep an up-to-date list of your medications by updating your 'My Medicines List' each time there is a change in your medications.



Starting a Medication

- What is the name of this medication and what is it for?
- What are the risks and possible side effects?
- Have I told my health professional about:
 - any allergies and other health conditions that I have?
 - any prescribed medications I am taking?
 - any medications I take that are not prescribed, including vitamins, supplements and herbal medicines?
- Is there another way of treating my condition?
- Is the medication intended for short-term or ongoing use?
- How should I store this new medication?
- How do I get more of the medication?

NOTES:



Taking my Medication



- When should I take this medication and how much should I take each time?
- What should I do if I have any side effects?
- How should I take the medication?
- Is there anything related to food and drink that I should know while taking this medication? For example, do I need to take it with food or avoid alcohol?
- What should I do if I miss a dose of this medication?
- What should I do if I take too much of this medication?

NOTES:



Adding a Medication



- Do I really need another medication?
- Is it OK to take this medication with my other medications?
- Have I told my health professional about:
 - the prescribed medications I am already taking?
 - any medications I take that I don't get on prescription, including vitamins, supplements and herbal medicines?
- What should I do if I suspect there might be a problem taking a new medication with the medications I am already taking?
- Will I be able to manage to take several medications correctly?

NOTES:



Reviewing my Medication



- How long should I take each medication for?
- Am I taking any medications that I no longer need?
- How often should my medications be reviewed?
- Does a health professional check my medications regularly?
- Do I keep an up-to-date list of my medications?

NOTES:



Stopping a Medication



- When should I stop each medication?
- If I have to stop taking a medication due to an unwanted effect, where should I report this?
- Are there any of my medications that I should not stop taking suddenly?
- What should I do if I run out of medication?
- If I have been advised to stop taking a medication, do I know the reason for this?
- If I have experienced an unwanted side effect of a medication, have I asked for professional advice about what to do next?
- What should I do with any leftover or out-of-date medications?

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What is the 'My Medicines List'?

- It is a simple way to keep track of all the medications you are taking.
- It can be a useful reminder, when talking to health professionals.
- **Keep the list updated and bring it to all your healthcare appointments.**

Filling in the 'My Medicines List'

- You or your carer should fill in the list.
- You can ask a friend, family member or health professional to help you fill in the list.
- List all your prescribed medications and any medications you take that you don't get on prescription, including vitamins, supplements and herbal medicines.
- Include things like inhalers, eye drops, injections, patches and creams.

Keeping 'My Medicines List' up-to-date

- Review and update the list regularly.
- Add any new medications that you start.
- Cross out any medications you no longer take.
- Update the list if there are any changes to doses or how often you take medications.
- Bring your list to reviews with health professionals.

Tip: Take a photo of the up-to-date list on your mobile phone so you've always got it with you.

Further copies of 'My Medicines List'

- You can get blank 'My Medicines List' templates online by scanning the QR code below.
- You can either print the blank copy and fill it in by hand, or fill it in on your mobile phone, tablet or computer and save it online.
- If you don't have access to a smart device, you can ask a friend or family member to print a copy for you.



Keeping an up-to-date list of your medications can help you keep track of your medications. It can also be helpful when you are discussing your medications with a health professional.



Transforming Medication Safety Northern Ireland

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SCAN ME

LEARN MORE

WE WANT YOUR FEEDBACK

We'd love to hear from you. Scan the QR code to share your feedback.

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