

Medication Handling and Storage

Introduction

You have received your first delivery of medications and a pharmacy staff member has explained how to use the medication, but safe handling and storage of medications can still be very confusing. This booklet is intended to give you general information about how to safely handle and store medications as well as how to report issues with your medication deliveries. You can receive the most specific information by contacting our pharmacy's office.

General Handling and Storage Information

- Some medications have special handling instructions. Check medication labels carefully to ensure they are handled and stored correctly.
- If the label states that the medication should be refrigerated, place it in a clean area of your refrigerator immediately upon receiving so the medication will remain stable until used. Avoid storing medications in the warmest (the door) and coldest (bottom shelf) areas of the refrigerator. The upper shelves are usually constant in temperature.
- If the label states that the medication should be frozen, place it in a clean area of your freezer immediately upon receiving so the medication will remain stable until used. Avoid storing medications in the door shelving.
- If the label states the medication should be stored at room temperature, store medications in a clean area away from heat sources such as the kitchen, heating vents, and windows.
- Follow your pharmacist's instructions for removing the medication from the refrigerator or freezer when it's time for your next dose.
- Medications have an expiration date beyond which it is not safe to use. Check medication labels and "do not use by" dates carefully and first use those medications that will expire the soonest. **Do not** use any medication that has expired.
- Some medications are considered hazardous and must be handled with special care. You may need to use gloves when handling the medication. Follow recommendations and instructions provided by your pharmacist.
- All medications should be kept out of reach of children and pets.

Important Information about Shipped Medications

- The pharmacy may ship medications to arrive prior to your scheduled dose. If your shipment is delayed or not received at the expected time, immediately contact the pharmacy. If necessary, a replacement delivery will be arranged so you are able to continue the medication as directed by the prescriber.
- Whenever possible and as directed by the pharmacy, someone should be at home to receive your medication delivery as it cannot be left on the porch or steps. Follow any instructions on the outside of the shipping container, as some medications need to be refrigerated or frozen immediately upon receipt.
- The medication cooler may have a temperature monitoring strip inside the shipping container. Follow instructions provided and notify the pharmacy if the medication arrives too warm or the strip indicates an out of range issue.

Special Handling and Storage Instructions

Shown below are special handling and storage instructions your pharmacy would like you to know: