



Medicine Talk

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Boozhoo from your Indian Health Service Pharmacy. We are very pleased to have the honor of writing the first monthly *Medicine Talk* article. The pharmacy staff is excited to have the opportunity to discuss important subjects relating to your health and the use of medications.

Understanding your medications – What you need to know

When you visit the clinic and talk to your health care provider or pharmacist, what information do you need about the medication you are taking? Here are some questions you should get answered before you leave the clinic:

- **Why do I need this medicine?**
- **Are there any foods or medications I should not take with this medicine?**
- **When should I take this medicine?**
- **How long should I take this medicine?**
- **What can I expect when I take this medicine? Are there side effects?**

Understanding your medication is vitally important to your health care. Knowing how to properly take your medication and what to expect when you take it will allow you to take a more active role in your health care and increase your knowledge about your medicines.

It is also important to remember to mention:

- **Allergies to any medicines and foods**
- **Special dietary needs you have**
- **If you are using any alternative medicines (plants/herbal/traditional medicines)**
- **Any over-the-counter medicines (aspirin, tylenol, cough syrup for example)**
- **Side effects from other medicines**

Some of the over-the-counter and alternative medicines can interact with medicines prescribed by your doctor. Talk to your doctor or pharmacist about the potential interactions with your medicines.

When taking care of your medication it is important to store the medicine out of the reach of small children. If young children are present, is it also a good idea to keep the medication in a child-proof container and to keep the medicine in the same container you received from the pharmacy. Most medicines should be stored away from moisture and sunlight – the bathroom, above the stove, or in a vehicle are not good places to keep your medicines. If you have any unused or expired medications please dispose of them properly. You can always drop off unused or expired medicines at the pharmacy. If any questions come up after you leave the pharmacy, remember you can call your pharmacist at the number on the prescription bottle.

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For more information on Medicine Talk, please visit www.wisdomsteps.org