

# Talking to my GP and pharmacist about my medicines

A Medicines Review is a service funded by the Australian Government to help you get the best from your medicines. There is no cost to you for the service. This brochure explains what's involved in a Medicines Review and provides some tips to help you talk with your GP and pharmacist about your medicines effectively.



How a Medicines Review in your home can help you get the most from your medicines

## Four questions for you to think about

The following questions in this brochure are designed to help you talk to your GP and pharmacist about your medicines.

Medicines include those prescribed by your GP or specialist, as well as any vitamins, supplements or non-prescription medicine that you might buy online, from the supermarket, pharmacy or health food store.

1. Do you know what each of your medicines is for?

Yes |  No

If you answered no, ask your GP or pharmacist to explain what each medicine is for and what it does to help you. If you're still unsure, your GP can review your medicines to make sure they are still the best options for you.



## 2. Do you have an up-to-date list of your medicines?

Yes |  No

Your GP or pharmacist can help you create a list of all your medicines. Take the list to all your medical appointments and keep it handy in case of an emergency. Learn more about [having a medicines list](#) and instructions for how to create one.



[Keeping a medicines list](#)

## 3. Do you think you are experiencing any side effects?

Yes |  No

Any medicine or supplement can cause side effects, even those you buy from a supermarket, pharmacy, online or health food store. It can be tricky to know if your medicines are causing a side effect, so talk to your GP or pharmacist if something in your body is not feeling quite right. Tell them if a symptom bothers you and it doesn't improve, like if your stomach is upset or you feel a bit dizzy. Take notice of how you feel after starting a medicine or after changing the dose of one of your medicines.

You might assume your body feels this way because you are getting older or your condition is worsening, but it could be that your medicines need adjusting or changing. Physical changes that occur as we get older can make our bodies more sensitive to the effects of medicines, even those you have taken for a long time. [Side effects](#) are more likely when you start a new medicine or when you increase the dose of a medicine. Often these are mild and go away on their own. But if side effects continue to bother you, even if they are only mildly uncomfortable, tell your GP or pharmacist.



[Side effects from your medicines: five questions to ask](#)

## 4. Would you like to take fewer medicines?

Yes |  No

If you answered yes, tell your GP and pharmacist. Be open about why you'd prefer to take less medicines. It might be possible to take fewer medicines, or there may be a non-medicine option that you can try.

**Always talk to your doctor before stopping, starting or changing any of your medicines ●**

# Having a Medicines Review

## What to expect?



### Step 1

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



### Step 2

If you and your GP agree to a Medicines Review, your GP will refer you to a credentialed pharmacist.



### Step 3

The pharmacist will contact you to organise a suitable time and place for the Medicines Review.



The review is usually conducted in your home. You can ask the pharmacist to wear a mask during the visit if it makes you more comfortable.



### Step 4

At the Medicines Review you and the pharmacist will spend time talking about your medicines. You can have a family member, friend or carer present.



### Step 5

After the review, the pharmacist will send your GP a report. This may include suggestions to change your medicines.



### Step 6

You will need to make a specific appointment with your GP to discuss the Medicines Review report and develop a written Medication Management Plan.

## Medicines Advice Initiative Australia (MAIA)

PROVIDED BY

University of South Australia,  
Quality Use of Medicines and Pharmacy  
Research Centre

IN ASSOCIATION WITH

Australian Medicines Handbook (AMH)

Drug and Therapeutics Information  
Service (DATIS)

Discipline of General Practice,  
The University of Adelaide

National Aboriginal Community Controlled  
Health Organisation (NACCHO)

Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (PSA)

Council of Australian Therapeutic  
Advisory Groups (CATAG)

MAIA is funded by the Australian  
Government through the Quality Use  
of Diagnostics, Therapeutics and  
Pathology Program.



Australian Government  
Department of Veterans' Affairs

MAIA materials are adapted from the Veterans' MATES program materials. This material is used under licence from the Australian Government, © Commonwealth of Australia, Department of Veterans' Affairs 2023.

The views expressed in the MAIA materials do not necessarily represent the views of the Minister for Veterans' Affairs or the Department of Veterans' Affairs. The Commonwealth does not give any warranty nor accept any liability in relation to the content or use of this material.



Supporting quality use  
of medicines.