

### Medication use reviews

Identifies whether patients understand how their medicines should be used, are they as taken as prescribed, indications. This service is provided for patients who have been using the pharmacy for the dispensing of their prescriptions for the previous three months.

### New medicines service

This service is for newly prescribed medicines for the following conditions only:

- Asthma
- Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)
- Type 2 diabetes
- High blood pressure, a new blood-thinning medicine.

You can talk to the community pharmacist about your new medication and ask questions relating to side effects, fitting medication in around your life style.

### The Minor Ailments Scheme

This scheme is a community pharmacy service, which can provide advice on treatment on certain minor ailments. To take part, you need to get a Patient Passport from your GP surgery, which shows you are registered with a GP in

Hammersmith & Fulham, Kensington & Chelsea, or Westminster.

The above services are offered by community pharmacies - you need to check whether your local pharmacy provides these.

## Medicines & falls



A guide to understanding how medications can affect your falls risk, and how you can safely manage them.

**Falls Prevention Service**

**There are many drugs that may make older people more likely to have a fall. They can change the way the body's natural balance systems work. As people get older this can be more of a problem, and if you are taking 4 or more medications, your risk is increased.**

Two drug side-effects which can be a problem are sleepiness (sedation) and faintness / dizziness.

**Sleepiness (Sedation) can be caused by:**

- Sleeping tablets
- Tranquillizers
- Older drugs for depression
- Older drugs for hay-fever and allergy
- Drugs that are used to treat mental health problems

Experts discourage the use of sleeping tablets or tranquillisers for too long. However, if you have been taking these types of drugs for some time and want to stop them, you must discuss this with your GP. Your GP should be able to help you gradually reduce the dose, which will help reduce the potential side-effects of withdrawal.

**Dizziness / faintness can be caused by:**

- Drugs for high blood pressure
- Drugs for other heart problems

- Drugs for urinary problems
- Older medications for depression
- Drugs for some mental health problems
- Drugs for Parkinson's Disease
- Prochlorperazine (Stemetil®) – this drug used to treat vertigo can unfortunately cause dizziness and falls, especially in older people.

Remember – do not stop any of these drugs suddenly. If you feel that one of your medicines may be making you feel drowsy, faint or dizzy, check with your local chemist to check whether it can cause these effects.

### *How can I manage my medications?*

**Have a medication review**

- Have a medication review regularly by your GP– every 12 months, or every 6 months if you're taking 4 or more medications or are over 75 years
- The medication review aims to check if:
  - Your medication doses are still effective
  - You are experiencing side-effects
  - You are able to take the medicines effectively- Whether your blood test is done and monitored as needed depending on your medication

**Ask about new medications**

- What does this medicine do?
- How and when should I take it?
- How will I know it is helping me?
- What side effects are most likely?
- What should I do if I get these side effects?
- How does this medicine mix with other medicines including over the counter (OTC), food & drink?
- How long will I need to take this medicine for?
- What do I do if I miss a dose?

**Know your medicines**

- Keep a list of medicines you are taking
- Always read the leaflet given with the medicine.
- Do not throw away the packaging of your medicine, until you have finished it.
- Do not buy or take other medicines without checking with your GP or Pharmacist that it is safe to take them with your regular medicines.
- Never share or give your medicines to anyone else
- If you have memory difficulties, consider using a dossette box.

