

## Ask the Pharmacist

The pharmacist is the best source of information to help you get the most out of your medicine. Here to answer your questions on medicine is Sharon Joseph, a pharmacist with over 3 years of experience. She is currently managing an independent pharmacy in Petaling Jaya.

### TIPS FOR MANAGING MULTIPLE DRUGS

**Q: Recently my mother had some health complications and she has to take a number of pills each day. She often forgets to take her medicine and at times, she takes the wrong medicine. Any advice or tips for this?**

**A:** Although medicines can help you feel better, they can be dangerous to health if misused. One way to achieve compliance is to have a good understanding of the drugs you are taking. Usually, people who are well-educated about their health condition are more likely to understand the benefits of taking their medicine.

To help you remember to take your medicine, link it with parts of your daily routine instead of a time of the day. For example, if you need to take medication once a day, you could do it when you watch the evening news. If you need to take medication twice a day, once in the morning and evening, you could do it before brushing your teeth.

Another way to help you organize your medication is by using a pill box. There are several types of pill boxes available, which you can choose to suit your needs. Some have compartments labeled for each day of the week, while some are labeled morning, afternoon, evening, night. You could also set up a timer or an alarm clock as a reminder to take your medication.



### CHILD REFUSES MEDICATION

**Q: I have great difficulty getting my two-year-old to take her medicine. Do you have any advice to overcome this problem?**

**A:** It is important for children to take the doses of medicine they have been prescribed. Here are some tips that might help:

- Request for medication in liquid form instead of tablets whenever possible.
- You could try to ask if the medicine is available in a flavour that your child likes.
- Check if the medicine can be mixed with something sweet like honey or juice. If it is in tablet form, check if it can be mixed with other solid foods.
- Instead of using a spoon, you could use a syringe to squirt the medicine in your child's mouth. While squirting, do point it towards her cheek. Do not squirt straight down her throat as it might cause choking.
- You could offer rewards for taking her medicine.
- If your child still refuses to take her medicine, try again later in half an hour.