

My Medications and Me

*Your guide to what to do with medications
during and after your hospital stay*

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Managing your medications on the St. Mary's of the Lake Hospital Geriatric In-Patient Unit...

This booklet will help you in the safe handling of your medications.

The pharmacy department at St. Mary's supplies medications to each inpatient (i.e. a patient who sleeps overnight at the hospital). The pharmacy department does not dispense nor sell any medications to the general public.

If you brought your medications with you?

If you brought your own supply of medications into the hospital with you, the doctor will review them and then send them to our pharmacy department for safe keeping until you are discharged from the hospital.

During your stay at St. Mary's, the doctors may make some changes to your medications. It is extremely important that you keep this in mind especially if you go home at the weekends or overnight.

Contact

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact:

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So who handles my refills now?

Usually the doctors at the hospital write prescriptions for one month's supply of medications only (i.e. no refills prescribed). This does not mean that you stop taking those medications once the bottle is empty. It means that the hospital doctor wants you to see your family doctor for regular refills of each medication.

It is important to make an appointment with your family doctor soon (within 1-2 weeks) after being discharged from the hospital so that you can get refills of your prescriptions and get checked regarding your progress in general.

When you are discharged the hospital will send a new medication list to your family doctor so that your records are updated at the time of your next visit. Generally, after you have been seen by a specialist he/she may prescribe a medication for you. Most often they will not prescribe any refills - they will leave that up to your family doctor.

Therefore, when you read "Refills:0" on your prescription bottle label, it is important that you check in with your family doctor regarding whether or not you are supposed to continue taking it or not.

DO NOT assume!

If you go home for the weekend?

If you go home for the weekend, the pharmacy department will prepare a package for you containing all the medications that you will need over the weekend. Each container will be clearly labelled with instructions on how to take it.

DO NOT take any prescription medications during the weekend other than those that are in your weekend package.

If you go out on a "day pass"?

If during your stay at St. Mary's you are granted a "day pass" (up to 24 hours out of the hospital to visit with family, etc.), the nursing staff will provide you with a supply of medications to take with you for that time period.

DON NOT take any prescription medications during the day pass other than those that the nurse supplied you with.

When you are discharged from the hospital?

When you are discharged, the doctors will give you prescriptions to take to your pharmacy.

These prescriptions will be the most up-to-date medications that you will take from now on. They will include any new medications and all the medication changes that were made during your stay at St. Mary's.

To avoid confusion and subsequent toxicity - it would be best to safely discard all of your previous medications that you were taking prior to your admission to St. Mary's.

How do I discard my medications?

When you are discharged home from hospital, you have two choices with respect to your medications:

1. You can completely dispose of all of your previous medications (easiest route).

Avoid flushing your medications down the toilet. Take them to your pharmacy for safe disposal.

OR

2. You can take your new prescriptions **PLUS** all of your previous medication containers to your pharmacist and ask them to sort it out for you.

It is important to avoid having two containers of the same medication with two different sets of instructions on the label. This can lead to confusion and consequent toxicity which might cause you to end up back in the hospital again!