

## **SHOULD YOU USE MEDICATION ?**

### ***WHEN YOU ARE NOT FEELING WELL, WHAT DO YOU DO ?***

*Do you think of whether your body is reacting to neglect ?*

*Do you consider whether you are getting enough nutritious food ?*

*Do you take a pill?*

Very often when you are sick your body is reacting to the way you have been treating it — for example:

- being too busy can make you run down so that you become more vulnerable to illnesses.
- not eating nutritious food can weaken your body so that you cannot fight infection easily.

Your body gives off warning messages when you need to take care of it eg. stomach tension. Attending to your body can prevent some illnesses.

If an illness is related to your way of living, it is always better to change the cause of illness rather than only taking medicine.

If you must use medicine, care must be taken in doing so.

## **AT THE DOCTORS OFFICE**

Your doctor should write down your *full* medical history. It ensures that prescriptions do not conflict with known allergies or physical problems.

It is important to find a doctor who makes you feel comfortable. You can change doctors until you are satisfied. You can also get a second opinion if you are unsure of the advice given, such as before having an operation.

Doctors should answer *all* questions about your health and medication. A good doctor spends time talking to you about your health and only prescribes when necessary.

- ask about alternative treatments
- ask about other effects of medication prescribed  
ask if physical dependence can occur
- ask about harmful effects if taken over a long time
- ask what to do if medicine makes you feel worse or does not work

Ideally all medication should be bought at one pharmacy. The advantage is that the pharmacist keeps a record of all medicines prescribed as well as all allergies. By looking at the record, she or he will know what medicines should not be taken.

### **At the drug store**

- if needed take a translator
- tell about allergies and reactions to medicines
- ask how to take medication
- ask when medication expires — see if written on container
- ask about other effects medication may have
- ask if there is a generic (no name brand) form of the same medication — it will be cheaper
- ask if the same medication can be bought over the counter — it will also be cheaper

## **GETTING THE BEST USE OUT OF MEDICATION**

- **How and when medication is taken is vitally important. Follow the instructions exactly.**
- Taking extra medicine will not speed healing.
- If too little medication is taken, it may not be effective.
- Try and find out all you can about medication you take. Use reference books. Many medicines can cause illnesses. You can often decide what is appropriate for you.
- Alcohol does not mix with medicine. It makes you more ill. It can also prevent the medicine from working.

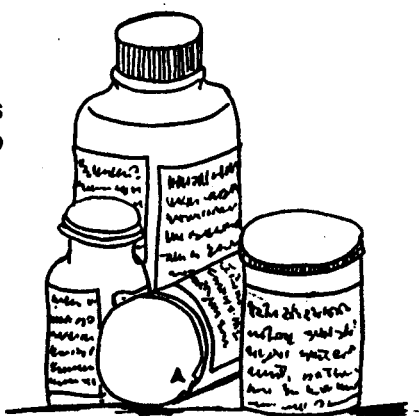
### **Antibiotics**

*All instructions for taking antibiotics must be followed to the end or they will not have enough time to kill all the germs causing the problem.*

*Antibiotic are **not** recommended while pregnant as the effects on the baby are unknown. However, when the baby or mother are at risk, antibiotics are taken.*

## **STORING MEDICATION**

- **store out of reach of children**  
— keep lids on tight
- **keep in container received**  
in — the colour or kind of container protects the contents
- store as directed. Not doing so can change effectiveness.
- take out cotton filler — once opened, the filler can absorb parts of the medicine
- keep medications in separate containers — they can react against each other and change effectiveness
- dispose of unneeded and expired medications (tablets and liquid down the toilet)



## **MEDICATION AND CHILDREN**

- Always supervise childrens' medication — even vitamins.
- Children cannot tell the difference between pills and candy. They can become seriously ill or die if they take too much or mix medication.
- Get emergency help immediately from a doctor or hospital if you think a child has taken inappropriate medicine.

**CALL 911 FOR HELP** (available in many languages )

## **PREGNANCY AND MEDICATION**

Everything you eat, drink and smoke goes into the baby. As many medications have unknown effects on the baby, they should be taken only in life or death situations with direction from a health worker — even aspirin.

*Babies born to women who have*

- *used alcohol regularly and heavily*
  - *used medical and street drugs regularly and heavily*
- are at risk of the following :*

- *being too small to survive easily*
- *mental impairment*
- *physical defects*
- *limited concentration and co-ordination*
- *behaviour problems*

## **MOOD ALTERING DRUGS**

Mood altering drugs are tranquilizers, anti-depressants and sleeping medications

They can be useful to people with more serious illnesses or on a short term basis while counselling is being received to resolve or lessen the problem.

### **Problems with taking these drugs**

often prescribed when not necessary

- dependence can occur (where person is not able to function well without the drug)
- they do not cure the problem
- they can make the problem worse — such as increased anxiety
- can react with other essential medicines
- can accumulate in the body — especially with older people

Ask your doctor about the effects of the medication and how long it needs to be taken.

When you stop taking mood altering drugs, do so with medical supervision.

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## 應否使用藥物

當你身體不適時，你會：

—顧慮自己是否營養不足？

—認為你的身體對你的疏忽起了反應？

—服食藥丸？

身體不適通常是由於你照顧自己的方法不當——例如：

•過度勞碌會令你感到疲倦，使你對疾病的抵抗力減弱。

•營養不足能令你身體衰弱，不易抵抗傳染病。

這時，你的身體便會發出一些警告訊號，如胃部不適，好使你加以照顧。適當地調理身體，可避免某些疾病。

假如你的疾病是與生活方式有關，你最好能改變導致疾病的原因，而並非單靠藥物。

即使你必須使用藥物，亦應小心使用。

## 請教醫生

你的醫生應把你所有的病歷列明，以確保他／她所處方的藥物不致與你已知的敏感或身體毛病相左。

選擇一個與你相處自如的醫生十分重要，你可以轉換醫生，直至找到滿意的為止。在決定是否採納醫生的建議時（如在手術前），你可以考慮別的意見。

醫生應解答你對於健康及藥物上的任何問題，一個良醫是願意花時間與你討論你的健康狀況的，並在必要時才處方配藥。

見醫生時，應詢問以下的問題：

—有關其他的治療方法

—處方上的藥物有沒有其他影響

—該藥物是否會造成藥癮

—長期服用該藥物會否帶來損害

—若該藥物沒有作用，或令病情更惡劣，你應怎麼辦

## 藥物配方

最好能在同一間藥房購買妳所有的藥物，這樣做的好處，就是該藥房的藥劑師會存有妳所有藥物的配方及過敏症記錄，一經查閱，他／她便可知妳對何種藥物有敏感。

## 到藥房時

- 若需要時，請攜同一位傳譯員
- 說明妳對藥物的敏感及反應
- 問明服藥方法
- 問明藥物何時到期——看看是否已寫在瓶上
- 問明藥物會否帶來其他影響
- 問明同樣的藥物有沒有以一般的 (GENERAL FORM) 形式出售——這會便宜得多
- 問明同樣的藥物有沒有以成藥出售——這也會較為便宜

## 藥盡其用

- ★服用藥物的方法與時間極之重要，所以必須依足指示去做。
- ★增加藥物份量並不能加速痊癒。
- ★藥物份量過少，亦可能影響效果。
- ★查閱參考書等，以嘗試找出有關妳所服用藥物的資料，不少藥物會引致疾病。妳可以決定甚麼才適合妳。
- ★切勿把酒精及藥物一起使用，因這會令妳的病情更惡劣，及妨礙藥力的發揮。

## 抗生素

妳必須徹底依足服用抗生素的指示，否則，藥物便不能有充份時間去消滅所有導致問題的細菌。

由於未能確知抗生素對胎兒的影響，所以，懷孕婦女不宜服用，但當胎兒或母親生命危殆時，亦會採用抗生素。

## 藥物的貯存

- 藥物應放在小孩接觸不到的地方——並把蓋關緊
- 藥物應放在原裝的瓶內——藥瓶的顏色及種類均可保護藥物。
- 依照指示貯存，否則會使藥物失去效用。
- 把塞住瓶口的藥棉拿開，藥瓶一經打開後，藥棉便會吸取部份藥力。
- 把不同的藥物放在不同的瓶內，以免引起互相反應而改變效用。
- 掉去不需要及過期的藥物（把藥丸及藥水倒入廁所中）。



## 藥物與兒童

- \* 對於兒童服藥事宜，甚至服食維他命，亦應加以指導。
- \* 兒童並不能分辨藥丸與糖菓，過量服用藥物或使之混合服食，都會令他們生病，甚至死亡。
- \* 若懷疑小孩誤用藥物，應立即向醫生或醫院尋求緊急援助。緊急電話：九一一（以多種語言服務）。

## 懷孕者須知

妳所有吃、喝及吸入的東西亦會進入胎兒體內。由於很多藥物（甚至阿司匹靈）對胎兒的影響亦未明，所以只有在必要時及在醫務人員的指示下才可服用。

經常使用酒精、鎮定劑及抗抑鬱藥都會損害胎兒。酗酒徒所生的嬰兒將會天生酗酒（胎兒酒精併合症狀）。同樣，吸毒者所生的嬰兒，亦會對母親所用的毒品有天生的毒癮。

一經常酗酒、或使用藥物及毒品的婦女，所生的嬰兒會有以下的危險：

- 一體形太小，以致生存力弱
- 一智力缺陷
- 一肢體不健全
- 一集中力弱及身體機能協調不足
- 一行爲問題

## 治療情緒藥物

治療情緒藥物是鎮定劑、抗抑鬱藥及安眠藥。這些藥物有助於患有較嚴重疾病、及正在接受輔導以解決或減輕問題的人在短期內服用。

你應向醫生查明藥物的功效及需服用多久。

在你停止使用治療情緒藥物前，亦必須依照醫生的指示。

服用這些藥物應考慮以下各點：

- 一處方是否必要
- 一可能造成藥癮（非靠藥物不能工作）
- 一並不能起徹底的治療的作用
- 一可能增加焦慮
- 一會與其他主要藥物產生反應
- 一會積聚在體內——尤以老人爲甚