

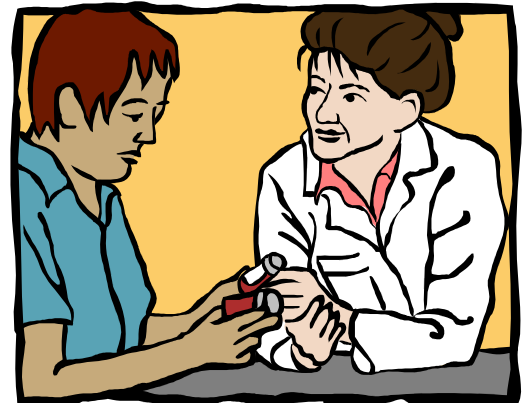
Knowing about and taking your medicine in the right way is important to your health. The way you take a prescribed medicine can make a big difference to how effective it is. Understanding how and when to take your medicine, and how to recognise and deal with side effects is important to your general well being.. Many people make mistakes with taking their medicine without even realising it. It's a known fact that approximately half (50%) of people taking prescribed medicine do not take it properly.

In order to help you understand what each medicine is for and how to take it properly, a new pharmacy service has been introduced, we call it "Medicines Check" and the good news is, it is totally free to those eligible to receive it.

## How do I know if I need a Medicines Check?

It is especially useful for those people who:

- Find it difficult to remember to take medicines
- Take more than 3 medicines or 12+ doses a day
- Don't know how and when to take their medicines
- Don't know what their medicines do or why they are taking them
- Haven't got their symptoms under control
- Have side effects from their medicine
- Find their medicine difficult to take or swallow.



While you may recognise some of these signs, there may be other things that you are not aware of or may not notice and you could be putting your health at risk without even realising it. For instance, you may be taking your medicines regularly, but may not be taking them at the right time of day or you may be taking them with other medicines that may have an impact on their effectiveness, so it may still be worthwhile talking to your pharmacist.

## What is involved in a Medicines Check?

It involves sitting down with your pharmacist with all your medicines in a private consultation area and talking about them and any concerns you may have. You are entitled to 3 consultations following the initial consultation over a period of 12 months (one year). The first consultation may take a little longer than the others, approximately 45 minutes in order to gather all the relevant information required to assist you. Your pharmacist is there to listen so this is an opportunity to voice any concerns or questions you may have about your medicines. Together, problems or difficulties will be identified. Your pharmacist will explain any queries and talk you through any changes that you may need to make. The aim is to ensure you get the most out of your medicines with the intention of improving your health. The consultation will be documented and you, along with your GP, will receive a report of this



## Information for Patients

discussion with an Action Plan, if required.

### **I see my Doctor regularly, so why do I need a Medicines Check?**

This service is in addition to seeing your doctor, and the aim is to reinforce the treatment prescribed by your doctor. The pharmacist is not going to change what your doctor has prescribed, but will make sure you understand why you are taking the prescribed medicine and how best to take it.

It is by appointment and like any appointment made, it is appreciated if you let us know if you need to change or cancel it.

### **Do I have to pay for a Medicines Check?**

No—it is a free service to you.

### **Who is eligible for a Medicines Check?**

Anyone who has one or more chronic (long-term) health conditions and is taking multiple medications (4 or more medicines per day) and is living independently at home in the community.

### **Where do I go to get a Medicines Check?**

Not all pharmacies will provide this service. Pharmacists have to be qualified (accredited) and have a private consultation area in order to provide this service in their pharmacy. If your local pharmacy does not provide this service please contact your District Health Board to find out where this service is available.