

# PREVENTION TIPS FOR SENIORS

## SENIOR STATISTICS

- ◆ Over 70,000 seniors are poisoned annually - enough to fill a football stadium.
- ◆ Medication exposures account for 45% of all poisonings for seniors, followed by household products and food poisoning.
- ◆ Poison-related deaths account for 41% of deaths occurring in people over age 60.



◆ Seniors consume 1/4 of all prescription medicines and more than 1/3 of all over-the-counter drug products sold in the U.S.

## MEDICATION ERRORS

- ◆ Up to 15% of hospitalizations for seniors are due to medication problems.
- ◆ 40% of all adverse medication reactions happen to seniors.
- ◆ Up to 60% of seniors have no plan in place for remembering to take their medications. Use a method to remember when doses were taken.
- ◆ 20% of all poisonings involve toddlers taking grandparents' medication.



## HOUSEHOLD PRODUCTS

- ◆ Never mix cleaning products or chemicals.
- ◆ Do not put medicines, cleaning products and chemicals in the storage areas that contain food products.
- ◆ Lock medicines, cleaning products and other chemicals out of the sight and reach of children.



## TIPS

- ◆ Always turn on the light, and put your glasses on before taking or giving medication.
- ◆ Read the label on all medications and products before each use. Remember to follow the instructions for safe use, storage and disposal.
- ◆ Do not take medicine in front of small children.



## FOOD POISONING

- ◆ Avoid buying or consuming food from bent, bulging, broken or leaky cans.
- ◆ Wash your hands, utensils and food surfaces often.
- ◆ Keep raw foods separate from ready-to-eat foods.
- ◆ Cook foods to a safe temperature; use a food thermometer.
- ◆ When in doubt, throw it out.

For other food poisoning tips, visit <https://www.foodsafety.gov>

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## PRESCRIPTION MEDICINES

Name and strength of medicine	Color/Form (pill, injection, liquid, patch)	What is it for?	Start/stop dates?	How much to take and when?	Do not take with ...

## MY PHYSICIAN'S GUIDE

Primary Care Physician \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

Other Physicians  
 Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Specialty \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Specialty \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

Pharmacy/Drugstore  
 Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

# MEDICATION & POISON SAFETY TIPS FOR SENIORS



Florida/USVI Poison Information Center



Taking Calls From:  
St. Thomas  
St. Croix  
St. John

## Herbal Products & Prescription Medicine

Always check with your doctor before taking any herbal products or supplements.



Herbal products are not approved by the Food and Drug Administration, and are not tested for safety and effectiveness, as are prescription medicines. Because few studies have been done on herbals, little is known about how they may help or hurt people with certain medical conditions. Some herbals are known to cause problems if mixed with prescription medicine. For example, persons on prescription blood thinners should not take capsicum, chondroitin, fish oils, garlic pills, ginkgo or ginseng because these herbals may cause an increase risk of bleeding. To check for possible interactions with your medicine and herbal products, talk with your doctor or pharmacist, or log on to the National Institutes of Health at [www.nccam.nih.gov/health](http://www.nccam.nih.gov/health).

## How the Poison Center Can Help Seniors:

- Access to a free hotline 24 hours a day at 1-800-222-1222 (VTTY)
- Immediate response by skilled and certified medical professionals to questions about illness due to poison or medication
- Order free poison information materials
- Visit the Poison Control Center website at [www.floridapoisoncontrol.org](http://www.floridapoisoncontrol.org)

### Nonprescription Medicines

- ◇ Antihistamines \_\_\_\_\_
- ◇ Cold/cough medicine \_\_\_\_\_
- ◇ Laxatives \_\_\_\_\_
- ◇ Pain relievers \_\_\_\_\_
- ◇ Other \_\_\_\_\_

My Allergies

### Herbals, Supplements & Vitamins

Fold Here

### Personal Medical Record

This form can help you keep track of all medications ... prescribed and over-the-counter. Make copies of the blank form and use it again. Take the form with you each time you visit your doctor or pharmacist.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Blood Type \_\_\_\_\_

Emergency Contact:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

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