

# New Medicines: Questions to Ask the Doctor

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Ask the following questions if your doctor recommends a new medicine for your health condition.

## General questions

What is the name of the medicine?

Brand name (trade name)

Generic name (chemical name)

What will the medicine do (for example, decrease blood pressure)?

Why do I need this medicine?

Are there any other medicine or treatment options?

How much does the medicine cost?

Is a generic form of the medicine available and appropriate for me?

Can I start with a prescription for a few days to make sure the medicine agrees with me?

## Questions about taking the medicine

How is the medicine taken (for example, orally [by mouth] or through a skin patch)?

What amount do I take each time (dose)?

How often should it be taken (for example, 3 times a day)? When?

Should I take it with or without food?
What should I avoid while taking it (for example, certain foods, activities, other medicines, or alcohol)?
Will it interact with other medicines I am currently taking or other medical conditions?      Yes      No If yes, what might occur?
What are the common side effects (those that do not usually cause problems)?
What side effects should I report if I experience them?
What do I do if I miss a dose?
How long will I need to take this medicine (days, weeks, months)?
How will I know that the medicine is helping?
What is the next step if this medicine doesn't work?

## Reminders

- Be sure you understand your doctor's instructions.
- State any concerns you have about taking the medicine. For example, ask if "4 doses daily" means taking a dose every 6 hours around the clock or just during regular waking hours.



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