



Craig Hospital

Redefining Possible for People with Spinal Cord and Brain Injuries

Provided as a courtesy of
Craig Hospital
3425 South Clarkson St.
Englewood, Colorado 80113

www.craighospital.org

For more information:

Craig Hospital Nurse Advice Line

1-800-247-0257

Managing Your Medications

Visiting Your Doctor

You are in a partnership with your physician for your long-term health care. Together, you and your doctor will keep you on track for a healthier and more functional life. The field of medicine is so broad that it is impossible for any physician to be an expert on everything. In fact, it is not uncommon for people to visit different doctors for different problems. This can sometimes result in “too many cooks in the kitchen” – several different doctors prescribing several different medications for several different problems.

But, medications all come with unique risks and benefits and can even interact with each other to create additional risks and/or benefits that are sometimes unexpected. When you make an appointment with your doctor, think ahead about the information you need. Arrive with your questions already written out and a complete list of all the medications you currently take. This will help you and your doctor look at the big picture and develop a care plan that will work for you.

Questions

Ask specific questions, such as:

- What are the potential side effects of treatment, surgery, or medications that may arise as a result of SCI or TBI? If your physician is uncertain, insist that he or she find out.
- Why is he or she prescribing this treatment or medication? What will be the short and long-term effects, particularly on your vulnerable body systems? Will it affect your bowel or bladder? Will you need attendant care?
- Are there alternative treatments or medications for your condition? If so, what are the advantages or disadvantages?

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Important Medication – DO'S

- Take your medications as directed.
- Know why you are taking it and any expected side effects.
- Tell your health care provider and pharmacist about all medications you are taking, including vitamins, herbs, and over-the-counter drugs.
- Ask your health care provider what to do if you miss a dose.
- Refill medications before you run out.
- Call your health care provider early if you need a prescription renewed.
- Check the medication label to ensure you are taking the correct medicine and dose.
- Ask about any medication interactions with food, alcohol, and other medications.

Important Medication – DO NOT'S

- Do not take medication in the dark.
- Always read the label prior to taking medication.
- Do not take expired medication. Always check the label for an expiration date.
- Don't stop or start a new medication before talking with your health care provider first.
- Don't spend a lot of time in the sun when taking antibiotics. These medications can make you more sensitive to the sun. Always wear sunscreen.

Medication Worksheet

On the next few pages is a worksheet to keep track of all your medications. Fill it out and keep it up to date. Bring it with you when you visit any healthcare provider!

Name:	Allergies:
Phone:	Vaccines:

MEDICATION	When To Take			
	Morning	Noon	Evening	Bedtime
Name: How Much: Why: Cautions:				

Name:	Allergies:
Phone:	Vaccines:

MEDICATION	When To Take			
	Morning	Noon	Evening	Bedtime
Name: How Much: Why: Cautions:				