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Medication Safety

Patient name: _____ Admission: _____

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I. The client/caregiver will list information to communicate with physician.

- A. Create a list of all medicines, vitamins, and herbal and/or dietary supplements that you are currently taking. Keep this list up to date. Make a copy of this list, and place it in safe place in an available location for emergencies.
- B. Provide this list of medicines to all physicians and health care providers you visit. They need to have all this information before prescribing new medications or making changes.
- C. Always check with physician before taking any nonprescription medication or over-the-counter products such as a laxative or aspirin.
- D. Discuss the use of vitamins, minerals, and any dietary or herbal supplement before using.
- E. Provide health care team with information regarding medicine allergies. Also, list any documented food (shellfish, etc.) or environmental allergies.
- F. Learn the generic and brand name of your medications. They may look different; thus, check with pharmacist if in doubt.
- G. Learn about any tests needed during use of medication.
- H. Be aware of how many refills your physician has ordered.
- I. Know the reason you are taking each medication.
- J. Read the label each time you take medication.
- K. Remember to take medications. Use a memory aid such as calendar and pill box.

II. The client/caregiver can list information to discuss with pharmacist.

- A. Make sure that you can read and understand the prescription label.
 1. Ask for large print on the label if impaired vision is a problem.

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2. Ask pharmacist to write the label in language (words) that you can understand.
- B. Try to use the same pharmacy for all your medications.
 1. They will have a complete and up-to-date listing of your medications.
 2. They can monitor your medication for possible problems or interactions.
- C. Read the attached information regarding your medications that come with each prescription.
- D. Review the generic and brand name on your medications.
- E. Clarify with the pharmacist information such as
 1. Interactions with foods, alcohol, or other medications
 2. Activity to avoid while taking medications
 3. Instructions about taking medication with food or on empty stomach
- F. Ask for special lids on bottle if having problem opening medication.

III. The client/caregiver can list general measures to promote safe and accurate medication administration.

- A. Read the label carefully in a well-lighted room. Check label for accurate information. Follow the “five rights” rule.
 1. Right medication
 2. Right dose
 3. Right person
 4. Right route
 5. Right time
- B. Check label for expiration date.
- C. Do not write over label prepared by pharmacist.
- D. Do not combine different medications in same prescription bottles.
- E. Do not store medication near heat or humidity. Avoid areas in bathroom or near sink or stove.

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- F. Do not share prescribed medication with other people.
- G. Store medications out of the reach of children.
- H. Plan ahead to reorder so no doses are missed.
- I. Take all medications as ordered (complete antibiotic prescriptions).
- J. Report any side effects or problems to physician.
- K. Read the label each time you take medication.
- L. Remember to take medications. Use a memory aid such as a calendar, chart, or medication box that can be prefilled for a week's supply.
- M. Ask pharmacist or physician what to do if doses are missed.

IV. The client/caregiver states adequate knowledge of each medication.

- A. Side effects of medication and what side effects should be reported to physician.
- B. Recommendations for when to take medication in relation to meals or appropriate time of day.
- C. Generic and brand names.
- D. Any special safety precautions (i.e., decreased alertness makes certain activities dangerous and avoid taking with aspirin).

RESOURCES

Health care provider

Pharmacist

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