

# BROWN BAG IT!

## Get a Medication Review for Safety's Sake

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*B.A.*

Most Americans fill a dozen prescriptions annually, and after age 65, they fill up to 30 prescriptions every year. This is the average. Do you fit that description? Because many people take multiple prescription medications, in addition to vitamins and other supplements, it can be a challenge keeping them all straight. How do you know if they are all working the way they should?

That's where your pharmacist can step in, help you stay organized and make sure that you are taking your medicine safely to get the most benefit out of each therapy.

### It's Time to Brown Bag it!

Talk to your pharmacist today about a brown bag review. This is where you pull together all of your current prescriptions, any vitamins you are taking, herbal supplements and any other over-the-counter medications you may be taking or have taken recently, put them all in a paper bag (or whatever kind of bag you have around the house) and bring them into the pharmacy. At the time you and your pharmacist have arranged, your pharmacist will go through each medication, help you understand it better and review how all of your medications are working together.

### How Does a Brown Bag Medication Review Work?

Your pharmacist will go through, medication by medication, and make sure you understand what each medication is for, how and when to best take it, how to store it and answer any questions you have. They will look for any interactions between the many medications you are taking in case some are interfering with the effectiveness of others and to make sure that you are safe with your current regimen.

Your pharmacist will help you create a medication plan, so you can stay organized and in control of your health. If you are assisting in the care of someone else, your pharmacist can coach you on how to best help that person be on track and consistent in their medication use, even recommending organizational devices and other tips to make sure they are taking the right medication at the right time, every time.



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Your pharmacist will also then help you create an up-to-date medication list that you should keep with you at all times. This list should be shared with each physician you are being treated by, so they can update their records and make sure your health is being managed properly.

### How Does a Brown Bag Medication Review Keep Me Safe?

By doing a medication review with your pharmacist at least once a year, and following up with your pharmacist about your medications at every prescription fill, you are taking the initiative to get the most out of each therapy and make sure they are working the way they were designed.

Your pharmacist is the expert on your medications, and they know how to best help you manage your therapy in coordination with your health care team. They help ensure that you are taking medications the right way so they are the most effective; they make sure there will be no negative reactions with any other medications you are taking; and they prep you for potential side effects and what to do if they occur and note if any food you are eating with the medications would interact.

Plus, your pharmacist can help you if you are having trouble affording your medication and can be your advocate so you can get the care you need.

### Talk to your pharmacist today to schedule a medication review!

For more information, ask your pharmacist!

This information is provided by Michigan Pharmacists Association and:

