

5 QUESTIONS to Ask Your Doctor Before You Start Taking a New Drug

- 1 Why should I take this drug?** Make sure you understand what the drug is for. Ask if lifestyle changes, such as diet and exercise, might help.
- 2 Is the drug safe for me?** Tell your doctor about all the drugs, vitamins, and supplements you take. Also tell your doctor about any allergies or current medical conditions you have.
- 3 How should I take this drug?** Ask how often you should take it, if you should take it with food, and if you should avoid anything, like alcohol or the sun. Ask how long to take the drug and when you can stop. For example, do I have to finish the bottle or can I stop taking it once my symptoms are gone?
- 4 Are there any side effects?** Ask about side effects and how to know if you should call the doctor. Examples of side effects are headaches, nausea, or feeling tired or dizzy.
- 5 Is there a generic?** Ask if there is a generic form of the drug that would work just as well and save you money.

Use the 5 questions above to talk to your doctor when you start a new drug

When you pick up a new drug, make sure it's what your doctor prescribed. Go over the directions and side effects with the pharmacist, and double-check that it's safe to take with everything else you're taking, including any over-the-counter drugs, vitamins, or other supplements.

Read carefully, and save the paperwork that comes with your drug. Start taking it. Pay attention to how you feel and write down any side effects you have. Keep all your follow-up appointments with your doctor. If you want to stop taking the drug, talk to your doctor first.

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