

## USE MEDICATIONS SAFELY

**Supplement to:**  
**Physical Education/Health Education**  
**Grade 11 Active Healthy Lifestyles**  
**Module E: Substance Use and Abuse Prevention**  
**Lesson 1: Legal and Illegal Substances**

This package has been prepared by the Manitoba Institute for Patient Safety (MIPS) and is intended to be used with the existing information in Lesson 1 on *Alcohol and Other Drugs* and the suggested instruction on *How to Read an Over the Counter (OTC) Drug Label*.

This package includes:

- the current existing learning outcomes in the Grade 11, Active Healthy Lifestyles, Module E, Lesson 1
- an additional question for supplemental learning developed by MIPS on the information needed to use medication safely
- background information on medication safety
- student handout: *Student Self-Advocacy: 5 Questions to Ask about Your Medications*
- student handout: *It's Safe to Ask Student Medication Card*
- suggestion for instruction: *Scenarios for Small Group Work: Using Medication Safely*
- student evaluation form and answer key
- teacher evaluation form
- separate "Resources to print" document with handouts for ease of copying

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### **Prescribed Learning Outcomes**

- 11.SU.1 Explain ways in which drugs and other substances are classified.
- 11.SU.2 Explain the stages of involvement in substance use or abuse.  
*Includes:* Non-involvement, irregular involvement, regular involvement, harmful involvement, and dependent involvement.
- 11.SU.3 Examine factors that influence decisions regarding substance use and abuse.
- 11.SU.4 Use reliable information in making healthy decisions for helping self and/or others regarding substance use and abuse.

### **Essential Questions**

1. How are drugs classified?
2. What information is provided on a prescription drug label? Why?  
Reinforce the importance of reading the information and following the direction on the label. Also emphasize that only the person for whom a drug is prescribed should take the drug.
3. How do you make healthy choices when using different drugs?

### **Supplemental Learning – question developed by MIPS**

*What information do you need to use your medication safely?*

## Background: Medication Safety

Medications are the most common treatment in healthcare. When used safely by the intended person as directed by a healthcare provider, they can help improve health conditions. Taking medications safely requires that the person taking the medication know and understand what the medication is for, how and when to take it, and possible side effects. Even when a person is not abusing or misusing legal drugs (prescription and over-the-counter) it is possible for the person to be harmed from taking the drugs. Many factors influence a person's ability to use legal drugs safely. For example:

- **Drug packages can have poor labeling** – it is confusing and hard to understand (e.g. the recommended dose is difficult to read and one can unknowingly overdose or not take enough).
- **The names of a drug and packaging can be similar to another very different drug** (e.g. Gravol with ginger is a natural product with ginger. The name and packaging is very similar to the original Gravol which has the active ingredient dimenhydrinate).
- **The instructions for taking the drug are not thoroughly explained** (e.g. person stops taking their antibiotic because they feel better but before the entire prescription is taken).
- **The person mistakenly takes the drug differently than the instructions on the label** (e.g. label states take 1 pill four times a day = 4 pills and the person takes 2 pills twice a day = 4 pills).

Taking legal drugs incorrectly can have serious consequences. In Canada, there are 1.5 million preventable injuries to people from *taking* medicines for a health problem, or from *not getting a medicine* that was intended for them (e.g. a different one was given by mistake).

Examples of situations that can result in patient harm:

- Teen goes to a clinic with an infection and an antibiotic is prescribed. Teen forgets to tell the doctor they are allergic to penicillin and after they take the first dose they break out in a rash and become ill.
- Teen has the same name as another person in their doctor's clinic and they receive a prescription for a powerful drug they were not told about. They question it and the problem is solved before they leave and fill the prescription.

In these examples, asking questions and being part of the healthcare team can help avoid harm to oneself and one's family.

But - for most people, it isn't easy to understand medical terms. Many people find healthcare settings scary or they are too ill to speak for themselves. Some people are not comfortable asking their doctor, nurse or pharmacist questions. As a result, they don't speak up for themselves or their family members.

We can help to stay safe by speaking up for ourselves and our family and being part of our healthcare decisions.

The exercises and tools on medication safety give examples of important information to know and important questions to ask to help take medications safely. A good way to introduce medication safety is to ask students to view short animated videos on patient safety and medication safety as homework or to show them in class (series available at <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCtKszS2UTgtRMWiUkSy4ndA>)

*Learn to be Safe – Patient Safety Videos - five videos between 30 and 45 seconds long:*

*Video 1 – Overview, Learn to be Safe*

*Video 2 – Improving patient safety – things to do*

*Video 3 – Advocate for Someone you love*

*Video 4 - Communicate – It's Safe to Ask*

*Video 5 – Medication Card – Know and Show*

## Sample Script for Introducing Medication Safety to Students

When you choose a cell phone, you ask questions: “is there coverage outside the city?” Same thing when buying a car: “what are the safety features?”. But do you ever ask questions about your healthcare? About taking medications safely?

For example:

- You go to the clinic and an antibiotic is prescribed for you. You forget to tell the doctor you are allergic to penicillin and after you take the first dose you break out in a rash.
- You have the same name as another person in your doctor’s clinic and you receive a prescription for a drug you were not told about. You question it and the problem is solved before you leave and fill the prescription.

In these examples, asking questions and being part of the healthcare team can help avoid harm. But - for most people, it isn’t easy to understand medical terms. Sometimes drug packaging and instructions are hard to figure out. Many people find healthcare settings scary or they are too ill to speak for themselves. Some people are not comfortable asking their doctor, nurse or pharmacist questions. As a result, they don’t speak up for themselves or their family members. You can help to stay safe by speaking up for yourself and your family and being part of your healthcare decisions.

The exercises and tools on medication safety give examples of important information to know and important questions to ask to help take medications safely. A good overview of medication safety is at the Manitoba Institute for Patient Safety’s home page [www.mips.ca](http://www.mips.ca), *Learn to be safe - Patient Safety Videos* (animated – 5 videos approximately 30 - 45 seconds each)

## Student Handouts

Handouts for this supplement are on pages 6 – 8.

The *It’s Safe to Ask Student Medication Card* encourages people to complete a medication card including prescription medications, over the counter medications, herbal medicine and vitamins. Using the card can:

- help users gain and retain more knowledge about their medications.
- enable healthcare providers to be aware of the person’s current medication therapy.
- help to ensure that medications are used correctly.

The *5 Questions to Ask about your Medications* form is for people to take to their doctor, nurse and pharmacist as a guide to asking important questions about medications.

### It's Safe to Ask: Student Medication Card

### *Vous pouvez poser des questions au sujet de vos médicaments*

Share your medication list with your parents, doctor, nurse and pharmacist. Carry this card with you at all times!  
*Communiquez votre liste de médicaments à votre parents, votre médecin, votre infirmière et votre pharmacien. Ayez cette carte avec vous en tout temps!*

Name/ *Nom*

Address/ *Adresse*

Birth Date (dd/mm/yyyy)/ *Date de naissance (jj/mm/aaaa)*

Gender \_\_\_\_\_

Manitoba Health Registration #/ *N° d'immatriculation Santé Manitoba*

Personal Health ID #/ *N° d'identification personnelle (9 numbers/chiffres)*

Medical Plan #/ *Autre nom et N° d'assurance santé (e.g. Blue Cross)*

Family Doctor's Name / *Nom du médecin de famille*

Phone / *N° de téléphone*

Emergency Contact/ *Nom contact en cas d'urgence*

Phone / *N° de téléphone*

Second Emergency Contact/ *2° contact en cas d'urgence*

Phone / *N° de téléphone*

Pharmacy Name / *Nom de pharmacie*

Pharmacy phone number / *N° de téléphone (pharmacie)*

**Medical History / Antécédents médicaux:**

- diabetes/ *diabète*
- high blood pressure/ *haute pression*
- heart disease/ *maladie de coeur*
- breathing problems/ *problèmes respiratoires*
- other medical problems (list below)/ *autres problèmes médicaux (veuillez préciser)*

**My allergies or bad reactions to medications**  
*Allergies ou réactions indésirables aux médicaments:*

List your medications on other side/ *Inscrivez vos médicaments à l'envers*

If you have questions talk to your parents, or call your pharmacist.  
Si vous avez des questions, parler à tes parents ou téléphonez votre pharmacien.  
For additional copies, go to [www.safetoask.ca](http://www.safetoask.ca)  
Pour obtenir d'autres exemplaires, visitez le site [www.safetoask.ca](http://www.safetoask.ca)

**List all medications that you take. Include herbal medicine and vitamins.**  
*Indiquez tous les médicinales que vous prenez, y compris les plantes médicinales et les vitamines.*  
 Update your list. Cross out old medications. Add new ones!/Mettez votre liste à jour. Rayez les médicinales périmés. Ajoutez les nouveaux médicaments!

Medication name <i>Nom du médicament</i>	Strength <i>Puissance</i>	How much <i>Quantité</i>	How often and when <i>Fréquence et quand</i>	Date/Date		Reason for taking <i>Motif de l'administration</i>	Who prescribed <i>Qui a prescrit</i>
				Started/Debut	Stopped/Fin		
<i>Example: My drug Exemple: mon médicament</i>	<i>20 mg/tablet 20 mg/comprime</i>	<i>1 tablet 1 comprimé</i>	<i>2 times a day at breakfast &amp; dinner 2 fois par jour au petit déjeuner et au diner</i>	<i>May 1, 2008 1er mai 2008</i>		<i>blood pressure haute pression</i>	<i>Dr. Doe Dr. Tremblay</i>

**For More Information on Medication Safety:**

**Manitoba Institute for Patient Safety, Medication Safety:** <http://mips.ca/pf-med-safety-it-s-safe-to-ask.html>  
 Including videos on why the Medication Card is important, and how to fill in and use the Medication Card.

**Safe Medication Use:** <http://safemedicationuse.ca/>  
 A Canadian resource on how to use medication safely.

**MedlinePlus, Drugs, Herbs and Supplements:** <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/druginformation.html>  
 Includes overview of prescription and over-the-counter drugs, including dosage, side effects, precautions, and more.

**Mayo Clinic / Micromedex:** <http://www.mayoclinic.org/drugs-supplements>  
 Information on drugs and supplements is divided into distinct chapters including generic and brand names, descriptions, what to consider prior to taking the medication or supplement, drug interactions, how to take the drug, dosing, storage, side effects, etc.

**Drug Cocktails.ca:** <http://www.drugcocktails.ca/>  
 A Canadian website with facts for youth about mixing medicine, booze and street drugs.



## Student Self-Advocacy Handout: 5 Questions to Ask about Your Medications

Keep an up to date list of all medications that you take, including prescriptions, over the counter medications, herbal medicine and vitamins. Go to [www.safetoask.ca](http://www.safetoask.ca) for a free *Medication Card* that you can fill out.

# It's Safe To Ask\*

## 5

### QUESTIONS TO ASK ABOUT YOUR MEDICATIONS

when you see your doctor,  
nurse, or pharmacist.



**1. CHANGES?**

Have any medications been added, stopped or changed, and why?

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**2. CONTINUE?**

What medications do I need to keep taking, and why?

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**3. PROPER USE?**
**4. MONITOR?**
**5. FOLLOW-UP?**

Keep your medication record up to date.

Remember to include:

- drug allergies
- vitamins and minerals
- herbal/natural products
- all medications including non-prescription products

Ask your doctor, nurse or pharmacist to review all your medications to see if any can be stopped or reduced.



Institute for Safe Medication Practices  
Institut pour la sécurité des médicaments  
des patients du Canada



Canadian Society of Hospital Pharmacists  
Société canadienne des pharmaciens d'hôpital



MANITOBA INSTITUTE  
FOR PATIENT SAFETY



Winnipeg Regional Health Authority  
Office régional de la santé de Winnipeg  
Caring for Health  
À l'écoute de notre santé



Canadian Society of Hospital Pharmacists  
Société canadienne des pharmaciens d'hôpital



CANADIAN PHARMACISTS ASSOCIATION  
ASSOCIATION DES PHARMACIENS DU CANADA



SafeMedicationUse.ca



Nurses Pharmacists Midwives  
Institute for Patient Safety and Health

**Visit [safemedicationuse.ca](http://safemedicationuse.ca) for more information.**

Available in English and French

Download this form and a Manitoba Institute for Patient Safety medication card at [www.safetoask.ca](http://www.safetoask.ca)

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## Suggestions for Instruction/Assessment

### 1. Student Handouts and Videos

- a. Provide students with the *Student Self-Advocacy: 5 Questions to Ask about Your Medications* handout and the *It's Safe to Ask Student Medication Card* (note: the card can be printed, cut on the outside lines and folded into a pocket sized card) (both included in "Resources to print" document for easy of copying).
- b. On their own, or as a class, have students read through the *Student Self-Advocacy: 5 Questions to Ask about Your Medications*.
- c. Have students watch *Learn to be safe – Patient Safety Videos* (animated) available at: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCtKszS2UTgtRMWiUkSy4ndA>)  
Five videos between 30 and 45 seconds long:  
*Video 1 – Overview, Learn to be Safe*  
*Video 2 – Improving patient safety – things to do*  
*Video 3 – Advocate for Someone you love*  
*Video 4 - Communicate – It's Safe to Ask*  
*Video 5 – Medication Card – Know and Show*

### 2. Small Group Work

- a. Divide the class into small groups.
- b. Provide each group with one of the Using Medication Safely Scenarios on pages 10 – 15 (also included in "Resources to print" document for ease of copying).
- c. Half of each small group debate why they should answer "yes" to the question, and the other half debate why should answer "no".
- d. Small groups will discuss:
  - Are there exceptions to the yes/no answers to the question?
  - Are there times when it would never be safe?

### 3. Small Group Presentation to Class

At the conclusion of the small group discussion, have each small group present to the whole class on when it would be appropriate to make exceptions to the rule, and when it would never be appropriate to make exceptions.

### 4. Evaluation

This package includes an evaluation for students to complete, and an evaluation for teachers to complete, regarding their learning and teaching experience with using the medication safety supplement.

### 5. Take Home

Consider encouraging students to have their family members complete the *It's Safe to Ask About Your Medications - Medication Card*, available at [www.mips.ca](http://www.mips.ca)

## Scenarios for Small Group Work



### Using Medication Safely, Scenarios for Small Group Work

**1. It is never safe to take someone else's medication.**

You and your friends Jacob and Will are exploring the trails in Assiniboine Park, when Jacob gets stung by a bee. Jacob has a very severe allergy to bee stings. He has an epi pen that he is supposed to take if he gets stung, but he usually forgets it at home, and he doesn't have it with him. Jacob is having difficulty speaking and you can see that his tongue is starting to swell. Your friend Will has an epi pen with him, because he is allergic to peanuts. You know that it isn't safe to take someone else's medication.

**Should Jacob use Will's epi pen?**

- Are there exceptions to when it *would* be safe to take someone else's medication?
- Are there times when it would *never* be safe to take someone else's medication?

## Using Medication Safely, Scenarios for Small Group Work

### 2. It is never safe to take medication from an unmarked container.

Ella and her best friend are shopping at the mall and are about to see a movie. Ella has had a headache all afternoon but it's getting really bad. She really wants to take over-the-counter headache medication to get rid of the headache, knowing that if she doesn't, she won't be able to enjoy the movie. Ella's friend offers her pills from an unmarked pill container that she carries with her. She tells Ella that the pills are Advil and that they will get rid of her headache. Ella knows that it is never safe to take medication from an unmarked container.

**Should Ella take the unmarked pills, from the unmarked bottle, that her best friend is offering her?**

- **Are there exceptions to when it *would* be safe to take medication from an unmarked container?**
- **Are there times when it would *never* be safe to take medication from an unmarked container?**

### Using Medication Safely, Scenarios for Small Group Work

#### 3. Always use the same pharmacy for your medication needs.

Sarah has started taking birth control pills. She needs to refill her prescription, but the pharmacy where she's always gone to get her medications filled is not near her school, home, or work (it's near her doctor's office). She doesn't want to go out of her way when there is a much closer pharmacy she could go to. Sarah knows that you should always use the same pharmacy because the pharmacist needs to know about all of the medications you are on and make sure that they are safe to take together. Sarah could ask her parents to go to her usual pharmacy for her. Or she could go to a new, nearby pharmacy.

**Should Sarah fill her prescription at a new pharmacy?**

- Are there exceptions to when it *would* be safe to use a pharmacy other than your usual one?
- Are there times when it would *never* be safe to use a pharmacy other than your usual one?

### Using Medication Safely, Scenarios for Small Group Work

4. **Keep an up to date list of all medication that you take, including prescriptions, over the counter medications, herbal medicine and vitamins.**

Jack comes from a very private family. They don't talk openly about personal issues, especially when it comes to their health. Jack is about to go on a school trip and is thinking of completing a medication safety card to carry with him, since he is on a number of different medications. He would want his teachers and friends to have this information in an emergency situation. Jack is worried that his family might find out, or see the card, and be upset that he was being so public with his personal information.

**Should Jack complete a medication safety card and carry it with him?**

- **Are there times when it would *not* be safe to carry a completed medication safety card?**
- **Are there times when it would *never* be safe to be *without* your list of medications?**



### Using Medication Safely, Scenarios for Small Group Work

5. **Always know how much of your medication to take (the dose) and how and when to take it.**

Ian's doctor prescribed him antibiotics for strep throat and told him to take the medicine twice a day, 12 hours apart. Ian slept in this morning and forgot to take the medicine. Ian's mom advises him to take two doses this evening to make up for missing this morning. Ian trusts that his mom knows the best thing to do.

**Should Ian take two doses of his medicine because he missed the first dose this morning?**

- **Are there exceptions to when it is okay to *not* know how much of your medication to take, or how and when to take?**
- **Are there times when it would *never* be safe to not know how much of your medication to take, or how and when to take it?**



### Using Medication Safely, Scenarios for Small Group Work

#### 6. It is never safe to take expired medication.

Christine has been fighting off a cold all day. After school she goes home and wants to take some cold and flu medication. She notices on the package that the pills expired a few months ago. Christine's parents could pick her up a new package on their way home, but they won't be home for a few more hours. The closest pharmacy is too far for Christine to go herself. She knows it's not safe to take expired medications because they do not work how they are supposed to, but she really isn't feeling well and wants to take the medication.

**Should Christine take the expired cold and flu medication?**

- Are there exceptions to when it *would* be safe to take expired medication?
- Are there times when it would *never* be safe to take expired medication?



## Scenarios for Small Group Work: Using Medication Safely, ANSWER KEY

### 1. It is never safe to take someone else's medication – ANSWER KEY

You and your friends Jacob and Will are exploring the trails in Assiniboine Park, when Jacob gets stung by a bee. Jacob has a very severe allergy to bee stings. He has an epi pen that he is supposed to take if he gets stung, but he usually forgets it at home, and he doesn't have it with him. Jacob is having difficulty speaking and you can see that his tongue is starting to swell. Your friend Will has an epi pen with him, because he is allergic to peanuts. You know that it isn't safe to take someone else's medication.

#### **Should Jacob use Will's epi pen?**

In this emergency situation, it would be acceptable for Jacob to use Will's epi pen. Jacob is experiencing a serious medical condition and Will's epi pen could save Jacob's life.

#### **Are there exceptions to when it may be safe to take someone else's medication?**

- in an emergency situation (e.g. you have been prescribed the same medication but don't have it with you, and a person you know and trust has the same medication in the same dose and has it with them (asthma inhalers, epi pen))
- in an emergency situation where you have not been diagnosed with a condition nor been prescribed a medication, but it is an emergency and common sense tells you to use the medication (e.g. an undiagnosed bee sting exhibiting symptoms of anaphylaxis)

#### **Are there times when it would never be safe to take someone else's medication?**

- if you just want to see what it would feel like to take the medication
- if self-diagnose and self-prescribe without going to the doctor
- in a non-emergency situation
- if you have not been diagnosed by a healthcare provider with the same medical condition

## **2. It is never safe to take medication from an unmarked container – ANSWER KEY**

Ella and her best friend are shopping at the mall and are about to see a movie. Ella has had a headache all afternoon but it's getting really bad. She really wants to take over-the-counter headache medication to get rid of the headache, knowing that if she doesn't, she won't be able to enjoy the movie. Ella's friend offers her pills from an unmarked pill container that she carries with her. She tells Ella that the pills are Advil and that they will get rid of her headache. Ella knows that it is never safe to take medication from an unmarked container.

### **Should Ella take the unmarked pills, from the unmarked bottle, which her best friend is offering?**

Yes or no, with discretion. A headache is not a life or death situation. If Ella trusts her friend, then she could. If the pills are unmarked and do not look like any pills she's ever taken before, then maybe not. Ella is also in the mall where there is probably a pharmacy where she could buy her own medication, which might be the safest and best way to proceed.

### **Are there exceptions to when it would be safe to take medication from an unmarked container?**

- if you put the medication in the container and you know, for certain, what it is, and that the medication is not expired (e.g. a pill container indicating which pills to take on which days of the week)

### **Are there times when it would never be safe to take medication from an unmarked container?**

- from a stranger, or someone you didn't trust
- if the person who put the medication in the container didn't really know for certain what the pills were, what dosage they were, or how old the pills were
- at a "pill party"

### **3. Always use the same pharmacy for your medication needs – ANSWER KEY**

Sarah has started taking birth control pills. She needs to refill her prescription, but the pharmacy where she's always gone to get her medications filled is not near her school, home, or work (it's near her doctor's office). She doesn't want to go out of her way when there is a much closer pharmacy she could go to. Sarah knows that you should always use the same pharmacy because the pharmacist needs to know about all of the medications you are on and make sure that they are safe to take together. Sarah could ask her parents to go to her usual pharmacy for her. Or she could go to a new, nearby pharmacy.

#### **Should Sarah fill her prescription at a new pharmacy?**

It depends. If Sarah is on other medications, then maybe not. If Sarah is not on any other medications, or she knows for certain that all of her medications are safe to take together, then yes.

#### **Are there exceptions to when it would be safe to use a pharmacy other than your usual one?**

- in an emergency situation or a situation of necessity (e.g. regular pharmacy is closed on evenings and weekends and you need the prescription filled during those times; or you are travelling and need a prescription refilled)
- if you move or want to start going to a new pharmacy (e.g. it's more convenient, the hours are better, etc.)

#### **Are there times when it may not be safe to use a pharmacy other than your usual one?**

- if you are on a lot of medications for a number of different health issues and understanding the reactions between medications is very complicated and time consuming to figure out. Staying with your regular pharmacy will be the safest choice.
- however, it should always be safe to use another pharmacy, as long as you let the new pharmacist know which medications you are taking, including over the counter medications and herbal products. Pharmacists in Manitoba have access to the Drug Programs Information Network (DPIN), and pharmacists can see any reactions between the prescription medications you are taking.

**4. Keep an up to date list of all medication that you take, including prescriptions, over the counter medications, herbal medicine and vitamins. – ANSWER KEY**

Jack comes from a very private family. They don't talk openly about personal issues, especially when it comes to their health. Jack is about to go on a school trip and is thinking of completing a medication safety card to carry with him, since he is on a number of different medications. He would want his teachers and friends to have this information in an emergency situation. Jack is worried that his family might find out, or see the card, and be upset that he was being so public with his personal information.

**Should Jack complete a medication safety card and carry it with him?**

Yes. Especially because Jack is on multiple medications, he should have this important information with him. Also especially because he is travelling and will be away from his family and regular health care team who know what medication he's on. To respect his family's privacy, he could find a way to keep the information available, but still confidential (e.g. a sealed envelope in his backpack that was clearly labelled).

**Are there times when it would not be safe to carry a completed medication safety card?**

- these would have to be exceptional circumstances (e.g. you were taking a medication that would be desirable on the street, such as OxyContin, and you were in a situation where you might encounter violence if people wanted to get your medications)

**Are there times when it would never be safe to be without your list of medications?**

- if you were on many medications and it was complicated to remember all of the information about all of them (e.g. for diabetes, or mental health issues)
- if you have trouble remembering the name and dose of your medications
- if you are on medications that could have serious reactions to other medications in emergency situations

**5. Always know how much of your medication to take (the dose) and how and when to take it. – ANSWER KEY**

Ian's doctor prescribed him antibiotics for strep throat and told him to take the medicine twice a day, 12 hours apart. Ian slept in this morning and forgot to take the medicine. Ian's mom advises him to take two doses this evening to make up for missing this morning. Ian trusts that his mom knows the best thing to do.

**Should Ian take two doses of his medicine because he missed the first dose this morning?**

Ian and his mom should read the information from the pharmacy that came with the medication or call his pharmacist before he decides whether to take one dose or two. The information from the pharmacy should describe whether it is best to take two doses at once or not of this specific medication.

**Are there exceptions to when it would be okay to not know how much of your medication to take, or how and when to take?**

- no, you should always know how much of your medication to take and how and when to take it.

**Are there times when it would never be okay to not know how much of your medication to take, or how and when to take it?**

- you should always know how much of your medication to take and how and when to take it.

## **6. It is never safe to take expired medication. – ANSWER KEY**

Christine has been fighting off a cold all day. After school she goes home and wants to take some cold and flu medication. She notices on the package that the pills expired a few months ago. Christine's parents could pick her up a new package on their way home, but they won't be home for a few more hours. The closest pharmacy is too far for Christine to go herself. She knows it's not safe to take expired medications because they do not work how they are supposed to, but she really isn't feeling well and wants to take the medication.

### **Should Christine take the expired cold and flu medication?**

It would be best if Christine could wait to take medication that was not expired, but it may be safe for her to take this expired cold and flu medication. Christine should ask her pharmacist and attempt to get new medication as soon as possible.

### **Are there exceptions to when it would be safe to take expired medication?**

- if it is an emergency situation and not taking the medication would be worse than taking the medication (e.g. an epi pen for an allergic reaction, a puffer for asthma during an asthma attack)
- if there are no other options for getting other medication at that time (e.g. late at night when all pharmacies are closed)

### **Are there times when it would never be safe to take expired medications?**

- for serious health conditions (such as diabetes, mental health conditions, or heart disease) the person taking the medication must always have the appropriate medication with them at all times.
- some medications are not safe to take after their expiry date. Talk to your pharmacist if you need more information.

## Using Medication Safely

### Student Evaluation

	Question	Circle Your Answer		
		Always	Sometimes	Never
1.	It's okay to take a medication a few days after the expiry date.	Always	Sometimes	Never
2.	I will carry a list of my medications with me.	Always	Sometimes	Never
3.	It's okay to stop taking my medication as soon as I start feeling better.	Always	Sometimes	Never
4.	If I forget to take my pill, I should just take it when I remember.	Always	Sometimes	Never
5.	It's a good idea to take my medication with food.	Always	Sometimes	Never
6.	It's okay to take my friend's medicine if we have the same health condition.	Always	Sometimes	Never
7.	I go to the same pharmacy for all of my medications.	Always	Sometimes	Never
8.	I read the information about my medications, regardless of if I've been on them before.	Always	Sometimes	Never
9.	It's okay to put my medication in a small container that fits into lunch bag, instead of the really big container it comes in.	Always	Sometimes	Never
10.	List four things you should know about your medications:	1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____ 4. _____		



**Student Evaluation: ANSWER KEY**

	Question	Circle Your Answer		
1.	<b>It's okay to take a medication a few days after the expiry date.</b>	Always	Sometimes	Never
	It may be safe to take an expired medication: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If it is an emergency situation and not taking the medication would be worse than taking the medication (e.g. an epi pen for an allergic reaction, a puffer for asthma during an asthma attack)</li> <li>• If there are no other options for getting other medication at that time (e.g. late at night when all pharmacies are closed)</li> </ul>			
2.	<b>I will carry a list of my medications with me.</b>	Always	Sometimes	Never
	We hope that students are encouraged to always carry a list of medications with them. We are genuinely interested whether this is something they would consider or not.			
3.	<b>It's okay to stop taking my medication as soon as I start feeling better.</b>	Always	Sometimes	Never
	Medication should always be taken until directed otherwise or until all of it has been taken.			
4.	<b>If I forget to take my pill, I should just take it when I remember.</b>	Always	Sometimes	Never
	Every medication is different. Read and follow the instructions specific to each individual medication. Sometimes it is appropriate to take a missed dose upon remembering, sometimes it is not.			
5.	<b>It's a good idea to take my medication with food.</b>	Always	Sometimes	Never
	Every medication is different. Read and follow the instructions specific to each individual medication. Some medications need to be taken with food, some medications should not be taken with food, and for some it doesn't matter.			
6.	<b>It's okay to take my friend's medicine if we have the same health condition.</b>	Always	Sometimes	Never
	Sometimes it may be appropriate to take medication other than your own, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• in an emergency situation (e.g. you have been prescribed the same medication but don't have it with you, and a person you know and trust has the same medication and has it with them (asthma inhalers, epi pen))</li> <li>• in an emergency situation where you have not been diagnosed with a condition nor been prescribed a medication, but it is an emergency and common sense tells you to use the medication (e.g. an undiagnosed bee sting exhibiting symptoms of anaphylaxis)</li> </ul>			

**Student Evaluation: ANSWER KEY (continued)**

7.	<b>I go to the same pharmacy for all of my medications.</b>	Always	Sometimes	Never
<p>It is best to go to the same pharmacy for all prescription and over-the-counter medications so your pharmacist can identify how all of your medications will work together, because some medications are not safe to take with others.</p> <p>Sometimes it is appropriate to use a different, or more than one pharmacy, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In an emergency situation or a situation of necessity (e.g. regular pharmacy is closed on evenings and weekends and you need the prescription filled during those times; or you are travelling and need a prescription refilled)</li> <li>• If you move or want to start going to a new pharmacy (e.g. it's more convenient, the hours are better, etc.)</li> </ul>				
8.	<b>I read the information about my medications, regardless of if I've been on them before.</b>	Always	Sometimes	Never
<p>You should always read the information about your medications.</p>				
9.	<b>It's okay to put my medication in a small container that fits into lunch bag, instead of the really big container it comes in.</b>	Always	Sometimes	Never
<p>Sometimes it is appropriate or necessary to put medication in a container other than what it came in.</p>				
10.	<p><b>List four things you should know about your medications:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The name of your medications</li> <li>2. Why you take them</li> <li>3. How they work</li> <li>4. How much to take (the dose)</li> <li>5. How and when to take them</li> <li>6. The possible side effects</li> <li>7. What to do if you forget to take them</li> <li>8. Foods, drinks, activities, and other medications to avoid</li> <li>9. How and where to store them</li> <li>10. How to get rid of unused or expired medications</li> </ol>			

## Using Medication Safely

### Teacher Evaluation

Thank you for your time in reviewing these materials and in using them in your teaching. We appreciate your feedback on the resources for this lesson. Completed evaluations can be submitted to [admin@mips.ca](mailto:admin@mips.ca)

### Background Information

- |    |   |     |    |
|----|---|-----|----|
| 1. | I reviewed the background introduction on Medication Safety:                  | Yes | No |
| 2. | This information was new to me:   | Yes | No |
| 3. | I used the script provided as an introduction to the topic with the students: | Yes | No |
| 4. | What did you like about the background information?                           |     |    |
| 5. | What could be improved in the background information?                         |     |    |

### Student Handout: *Student Self Advocacy: 5 Questions to Ask about Your Medications*

- |    |  |     |    |
|----|--|-----|----|
| 1. | I used the Manitoba Institute for Patient Safety's handout <i>Student Self-Advocacy: 5 Questions to Ask about Your Medications</i> | Yes | No |
| 2. | The handout is a helpful teaching tool:  | Yes | No |
| 3. | What did you like most about the handout?  |     |    |
| 4. | How could the handout be improved?   |     |    |

### Student Handout: *It's Safe to Ask About Medications* Student Medication Card

- |    |  |     |    |
|----|--|-----|----|
| 1. | I provided students with the <i>It's Safe to Ask Student Medication Card</i> ? | Yes | No |
| 2. | I believe students will complete the Medication Card and carry it with them.   | Yes | No |

3. How can the Medication Card be improved?
4. Is there additional information that could be included on the Medication Card?

**Small Group Exercise: *Using Medication Safely***

1. I had students complete the Small Group Exercise: Using Medication Safely. Yes No
2. After completing the exercise, students now know what information they need to use their medication safely. Yes No
3. How engaged were students in this lesson?
4. What did you like most about the exercise?
5. How could the exercise be improved?

**General: *Using Medication Safely***

1. Was it easy to incorporate the material into your lesson?  
Please describe. Yes No
2. Did the new information/activities “fit” with the existing lesson plan on substance use and abuse prevention? Yes No

3. Did students respond to the lesson?  
Please describe. Yes No
4. Would an online module help make this content more  
accessible to students?  
Please describe. Yes No
5. Do you have any additional feedback on this lesson and materials?