

# Minding Your Meds

Older adults use more medicines—prescription, over-the-counter (OTC) and supplements—than any other age group in the U.S. Thanks to these wondrous drugs, people are living longer, and feeling better than ever before. But medications need to be managed, and there is no better time than the start of a new year to take inventory of your medications to be sure they are up to date.

## Here's what you can do to be sure you are minding your meds in 2020:

- Make a list of the medicines you take, why you take them, how much you take, how much you have left and if you have any refills available.
- Take all medicine as prescribed by your doctor. Non-adherence can lead to significant health problems.
- Store your medicines safely. Keep all medicines in the bottle, box or tube they came in.
- Check expiration dates and discard any medicine that has expired. The best way to discard expired or unwanted medicine (both prescription and OTC) is to drop off the medicine at a drug take-back site. Most pharmacies will take your unneeded and expired medication.

- Use one pharmacy. That way, if you're prescribed new medication, your pharmacist will be able to let you know of any potential drug interactions with other meds you take.
- Plan ahead for travel. Be sure you have enough medication to take on a trip, and to take when you get home, too.
- Schedule your yearly check-up with your Care N' Care physician to be sure you are able to refill your prescriptions before they run out. This is especially important if you take medication that requires prior authorizations. You want to give yourself plenty of time to get your medication approved so you don't miss your needed dose.

And remember, as you age your body changes. You may gain weight, lose weight, or your liver and kidneys may not function as well as they did when you were younger. All of this means that your medication needs may change through the years. By keeping track of your medicine you will play an important role in managing your health – in the new year, and for many years to come.

