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Avoid medication errors with these tips

Prescription medications are a necessity for many people. The American Academy of Family Physicians says that, each week, four out of five adults in the United States will use prescription medications, over-the-counter drugs and/or various supplements. Approximately one-third of adults take five or more medications at the same time.

The potential for adverse drug events is elevated when people are taking multiple medications at one time. For example, mixing pills has the potential to cause serious injury or even death.

Doctors, patients and pharmacies must work together to ensure that medication is taken safely. One of the best ways to prevent errors with medications is for patients to take an active role in their health care management.

- Know your dose. Children are at an especially high risk for medication errors because they require different doses than adults, offers the Mayo Clinic. Adults of different weights who share medications can run into trouble as well. It is key to follow the dosing instructions, as even a minor error in regard to dosage can potentially cause a big problem.

- Follow up with your doctor. Certain medications can cause side effects that only can be noticed by lab testing, such as an impact to the liver. Doctors also may be under an obligation to follow up with patients taking psychological drugs to ensure the efficacy of treatment. Make sure you keep all follow-up appointments.

- Maintain a current list of meds. It is up to patients to share information with prescribing doctors regarding any and all products being taken to avoid harmful interactions. Using the same pharmacy for all prescriptions also is helpful.

- Be honest about height and weight. Medication labeling and package inserts typically use metric units to correlate dose to a person's physical attributes. Individuals should know their information in metric measurements and be honest with themselves about what they weigh.

- Use medications correctly. It is important not to chew nonchewable pills or cut pills unless the pharmacist or doctor has said it is safe to do so. Accurate dosing also requires using the right spoon or syringe, not silverware. Store certain types of medications, such as eye drops and ear drops, separately so they're not mistaken for one another.

These are just some of the ways to prevent medication errors. People can consult with their doctors and pharmacists for more assistance in staying safe.

Chiropractors can help with various ailments

Anyone who has experienced pain understands that it can be debilitating. Pain can make it challenging to manage everyday tasks and can affect relationships and physical and mental health in many ways.

Anyone who has experienced pain understands that it can be debilitating. Pain can make it challenging to manage everyday tasks and can affect relationships and physical and mental health in many ways. Pain medications were once the norm, but with the rise of the opioid epidemic, it may be wise to take a different approach to pain treatment.

Statistics from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality and the United States Department of Health and Human Services reveal that as many as one in five people received prescription opioids long-term for noncancer pain in primary care settings in 2016. While opioid use for pain does not always lead to abuse of these medications, opioid addiction has become a widespread problem across North America. These same agencies report that approximately 1,000 people are treated in emergency departments in the United States each day for misuse of prescription opioids. Between 2016 and 2017, opioid poisoning hospitalization rates went

up by 8 percent in Canada, resulting in an average of 17 hospitalizations each day.

Chiropractic care may be one avenue to pursue as a viable alternative to pain medications. While chiropractic manipulations are most often associated with back and neck pain, there are many different benefits — some of which may surprise those unfamiliar with chiropractic care — for this type of care.

- Migraines and headaches: Research shows that spinal manipulation can be an effective way to treat migraines, tension headaches and headaches that begin in the neck. In clinical trials conducted at Macquarie University, 72 percent of migraine sufferers had noticeable or substantial improvement after a period of chiropractic treatment.

- Accident injuries: Chiropractors can assess musculoskeletal anomalies caused by motor vehicle accidents as well as slips and falls. Whiplash is a common issue in car crashes, and this may be addressed by a chiropractor.

- Anxiety and stress: The fight or flight

mechanism that is activated when a person experiences stress and anxiety can take its toll on various parts of the body. Because stress involves nerve impulses, chiropractors may be able to work primarily with the spine where these impulses originate to help release tension and nerve irritation. In addition, adjustments can improve blood circulation, which may help signal the brain to turn off its “rally to action” response to stressful situations.

- Fibromyalgia: Fibromyalgia is marked by widespread musculoskeletal pain in the joints, muscles, tendons, and other soft tissues. It can be combined with temporomandibular joint syndrome, or TMJ, as well as irritable bowel syndrome, among



other illnesses. Chiropractors can remove subluxations, which are misalignments of the vertebrae in the spine and joints that lead to pain responses. A Florida State University study found that those with fibromyalgia who combined resistance training with chiropractic treatment two times a week saw improvements in their symptoms.

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