

Talking with your doctor about deprescribing

If you have a medical condition or disease, your doctor may [prescribe a drug](#). Medicines can help us live longer and healthier. But taking them the wrong way or taking certain drugs together can be dangerous. Also, as you age, changes happen in the body that may cause many medicines to act differently in older people. Keep track of your medicines and use them safely.

If you think your medicine is not working as it should, [talk to your doctor](#). You may want to discuss switching to a new medicine or stop taking a current one. Even if you are feeling better, you should not stop taking your prescription drug unless your doctor says it is okay. To [have a conversation with your health care provider](#) about deprescribing, consider these tips:

- Together, make a complete and accurate list of which medications are currently being taken. You may find it helpful to keep a [chart of all the medicines](#) you take and when you take them.
- Make sure you know the name of each drug and ask the doctor to write down how often and for how long you should take it. Ask if there are any that may not be necessary.
- Discuss any new symptoms and ask if any of your drugs might be causing them.
- Make notes about any other special instructions. If you are taking other medications, make sure your doctor knows what they are so he or she can prevent harmful drug interactions. Check with your doctor before taking any over-the-counter medications.
- Make sure you understand why a drug has been prescribed for you. Your doctor or pharmacist should be able to answer this question: What is the evidence of this medication actually helping your condition?
- Consider potential harms from the medications. Ask questions like, “Can this drug affect my memory?” “Can this drug increase my risk of falling?” Then have a discussion with your doctor about whether these benefits and risks make sense, and if not, if there are alternative options.
- Keep in mind your goals and those of your caregiver and what matters to you both in terms of quality of life.