

### Managing Your Medications

#### **Medicines and falls**

The more medications you take, the higher the risk of a fall.

Some sleeping medications and those for anxiety and depression have been proven to increase your risk for falls. These drugs may affect reaction time or concentration or make you slightly drowsy, which may increase falls risk.

- In general, if a drug says “Caution with driving,” you should assume it also means “Caution with walking.”
- If you have falls risk factors, such as muscle weakness, trouble with balance or walking, or vision problems, be cautious about taking medications that increase falls risk.

#### **Know your medication dosage**

In general, the higher the dose, the higher the risk for side effects.

Dosages for older adults are often about half of what they are for younger adults.

- As people get older, they often need a lower dosage to get the desired effect.
- As people age, they are more likely to experience side effects. A dose that was not a problem when you were younger can be too high and cause side effects when you're older.
- Always find the lowest dose you need to get the benefit. Re-evaluate to see if the drug is still needed. Ask your doctor if there is a safer alternative.

#### **Talk to your doctor**

Don't stop a prescription medication without talking to your doctor!

Do ask your doctor to check your medications to see if there are any for which you can lower the dose. Be sure to tell your doctor about any alternative (herbal) or over-the-counter medicines you are taking.

