

NEWS RELEASE



For Immediate Release

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MEDICINE SHOPPE PHARMACIES OFFER TIPS AND MEDICATION MANAGEMENT SUPPORT FOR CAREGIVERS

Pharmacists' Advice Can Help Prevent Medication Mistakes, Offer Perspective on Managing Life Outside of Caregiving

ST. LOUIS, March 1, 2006 – In the United States, more than 50 million individuals provide care for an aged, disabled or ill family member each year. And, for many caregivers, one of the more challenging aspects of their vast responsibilities is understanding and administering their loved ones' medication regimens. In fact, in a recent survey of caregivers, one in eight admits to having made a mistake regarding their loved one's medications.¹

Caregivers, however, do not have to handle medication challenges alone. Support from allies, like a pharmacist, will help prevent dangerous mistakes, such as errors in correctly administering medication. Medication mistakes account for over 100,000 deaths each year, most of which are seniors². Medicine Shoppe® Pharmacists are offering advice to caregivers on medication routines and the importance of looking for allies to help support caregivers.

“Caregiving can range from helping with an occasional trip to the supermarket to helping loved ones get out of bed, eat and take medications. When you add stressors like potential medication interactions and reactions, caregiving can be physically and emotionally draining,” said Lindsey Stephens, pharmacist and director of best practices for Medicine Shoppe International. “Because most caregivers are not trained medical professionals, it is important that they develop relationships with allies like pharmacists and doctors to empower themselves to provide the best care possible for their loved one.”

To avoid mistakes and minimize risks, Medicine Shoppe Pharmacists offer the following tips for caregivers:

- **Engage Your Pharmacist and Other Allies**
You are not in this alone. Make an appointment to take a list of your loved one's symptoms and medications to your doctor and pharmacist. This information will allow these health care providers to work together to monitor any changes. For example, your Medicine Shoppe Pharmacist can sit down with you to discuss your loved one's medication regimen and help monitor for possible drug interactions, identify possible side effects and suggest money-saving generic alternatives. Keep notes of important information and recommendations during these meetings.

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- **Stay Updated on Your Loved One's Condition**

Research your loved one's condition, including symptoms, treatments and medications used to treat it, both prescription and over-the-counter (OTC). Make a list of all the medications your loved one takes, their intended purpose and a schedule of when they are taken. The more you know, the more you can engage your doctor or pharmacist with questions and potential problems. When this list changes, or there are updates in your loved one's medication regimen, make an appointment to revisit your pharmacist to discuss how changes will affect your care recipient's medication schedule and regimen.

- **Set a Medication Routine**

Developing a plan for medication administration that fits your loved ones daily schedule is critical to ensuring that medications are taken at the right time, in the correct dosage and combination, and with or without food even if you aren't there. Your pharmacist can help develop this plan and recommend products for storing and organizing medications, be it via a simple pill box or one with a timer for reminders.

- **Take Care of Yourself**

For many caregivers, this is the most difficult challenge of all. When you take care of yourself, however, you will provide better care for your loved one. Consider delegating tasks to other family members and friends to minimize stress and create time for you. Your pharmacist can help you select the correct mix of vitamins and discuss healthy sleeping habits to ensure you are managing your health. They also can provide you with resources for caregivers in your community, such as support groups or counselors.

“We are committed to being an ally for caregivers,” said Stephens. “Our pharmacists are able to give personalized attention to the concerns of caregivers and help to ensure that they and their loved ones are given the attention and care they deserve.”

Caregivers can contact their local Medicine Shoppe® Pharmacy to set up an appointment to discuss a loved one's medication or for additional information. To find a Medicine Shoppe Pharmacy near you or to access a comprehensive medication information database, visit www.medicineshoppe.com.

About Medicine Shoppe International.

Medicine Shoppe International, Inc. (www.medicineshoppe.com), a Cardinal Health Company, is the largest franchisor of independent community pharmacies in the U.S. In 2003, Medicine Shoppe International acquired Medicap Pharmacies Incorporated (www.medicap.com), which franchises independent community pharmacies in the U.S. under the trade name Medicap Pharmacy®. Medicine Shoppe® Pharmacies and Medicap Pharmacy® locations are distinguished for their commitment to providing expert, personalized health care. There are more than 1,000 domestic Medicine Shoppe® Pharmacies and Medicap Pharmacy® locations and more than 300 pharmacies in six other countries.

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¹Donelan, Hill, Hoffman, Scoles, Feldman, and Gould. Challenged to Care: Informal Caregiver In A Changing Health System

²Dr. David Nganele Ph.D., MBA. *A Closely Guarded But Deadly Secret Every Caregiver MUST Know*