

# **SUMMERVILLE**

---

Family Health Team

## **Medication Safety & Preventing Medication Errors**

Yali Gao, Clinical Pharmacist at Summerville FHT  
Wed April 5, 2023

# Disclosures

- This session is meant to be for educational purpose only. Please refrain from disclose any personal medical information and asking for medical advice.
- There will be several polls throughout the presentation. Your answers will be anonymous.



# Some statistics

- Up to 50% of all medication is taken incorrectly
- Problems with medications account for 1 in 7 emergency room visits
- Two-thirds of Canadians 65 and older are taking 5+ prescription medications
- Adults 65 and older are twice as likely to visit emergency rooms for adverse drug events
  - They are also nearly 7 times more likely to be hospitalized after an emergency room visit





Why am I at risk?



# Poll

- **How many medications (including prescription and over-the-counter) do you take?**
  - None
  - 1-2
  - 2-4
  - 5-10
  - More than 10



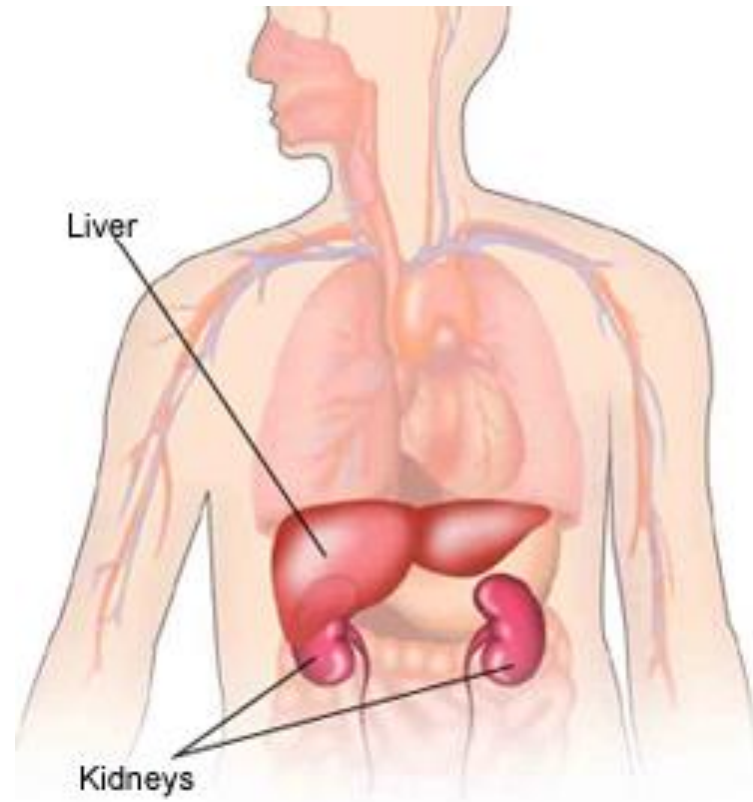
# Why am I at risk?

- More likely to be prescribed several medications, which increases the risk for drug interactions, mix-ups, and potential side effects



# Why am I at risk?

- Age-related changes in our body changes the way we process medications
- May result in increased vulnerability to overdoses and side effects



# Why am I at risk?

- Memory loss, poor eyesight, and poor hearing makes it harder to follow instructions for taking medications
- Poor dexterity makes it harder to administer medications







What can I do?  
... at home?



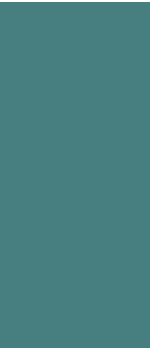
# Poll

- **Do you keep an up-to-date medication list on you?**
  - Yes
  - No



# At home

- Keep an up-to-date record of your prescription medications, over-the-counter medications, allergies/intolerance, and medical history





List all the medications you take, such as pills, patches, inhalers, eye/ear/nose drops, creams, ointments, and samples the doctor gave you. Be sure to include over-the-counter medicine, vitamins, minerals, herbal products, and recreational drugs (example: alcohol or marijuana). For your MedList to work, it's important to keep it up to date: use the date column to indicate when old medications were stopped and new ones added!

This list belongs to

Created on

Name of Medication <i>(example: atorvastatin)</i>	Dose/ Strength <i>(20 mg)</i>	How Much <i>(1 pill)</i>	How Often/When					Why I Take It <i>(to lower cholesterol)</i>	Additional Information <i>(Take with or without food; Prescribed by Dr. Goodheart)</i>	Date <i>(started or stopped)</i>
			Morning	Afternoon	Evening	Bedtime	As Needed			
			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			

To find out more, visit [www.albertahealthservices.ca/medlist](http://www.albertahealthservices.ca/medlist)

19710 (Rev2015-11) Adapted from 'It's Safe to Ask Medication Card' Manitoba Institute for Patient Safety. © 2014 Alberta Health Services

**If it's on the list, it won't be missed**

# At home

- If you believe you are experiencing side effects from a medication, consult your pharmacist, doctor, or nurse practitioner



# Poll

- **How do you organize your medications?**
  - Personal dosette you fill yourself
  - Blister pack from pharmacy
  - Keep medications in their original containers
  - Other



# At home

- Use a pill organizer or checklist to track what medications to use during what time
- Otherwise, leave medications in their original containers with the pharmacy label



# At home

- Place all sharps in a sharps disposal container
- Bring in old/expired medications into your pharmacy for safe disposal





# At home

- Use medications as directed. Do not change or stop your medications without consulting your pharmacist or doctor
- Read the information packaged with your medication for additional information – ask questions
- Do not cut, split, crush, or open capsules or tablets before asking your pharmacist



# At home

- Never share your medications with someone else
- Store medications in a cool, dry place, away from direct sunlight (unless otherwise directed) and out of reach of children





# What can I do?

... at the doctor's office?

# At the doctor's office

- Bring in the vials of all the medications you take to your appointments – include prescriptions and non-prescriptions



# At the doctor's office

- Read over the prescription your doctor or nurse practitioner gives you to see if it makes sense
  - Is it your prescription?
  - Is it a drug you're allergic to?



# 5 QUESTIONS TO ASK ABOUT YOUR MEDICATIONS

when you see your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist.

## 1. CHANGES?

Have any medications been added, stopped or changed, and why?

## 2. CONTINUE?

What medications do I need to keep taking, and why?

## 3. PROPER USE?

How do I take my medications, and for how long?

## 4. MONITOR?

How will I know if my medication is working, and what side effects do I watch for?

## 5. FOLLOW-UP?

Do I need any tests and when do I book my next visit?



What can I do?

... at the pharmacy?

# At the pharmacy

- Whenever possible, use the same pharmacy
- If not, bring an up-to-date record of medications and medical conditions when getting prescriptions filled



# Common drug interactions

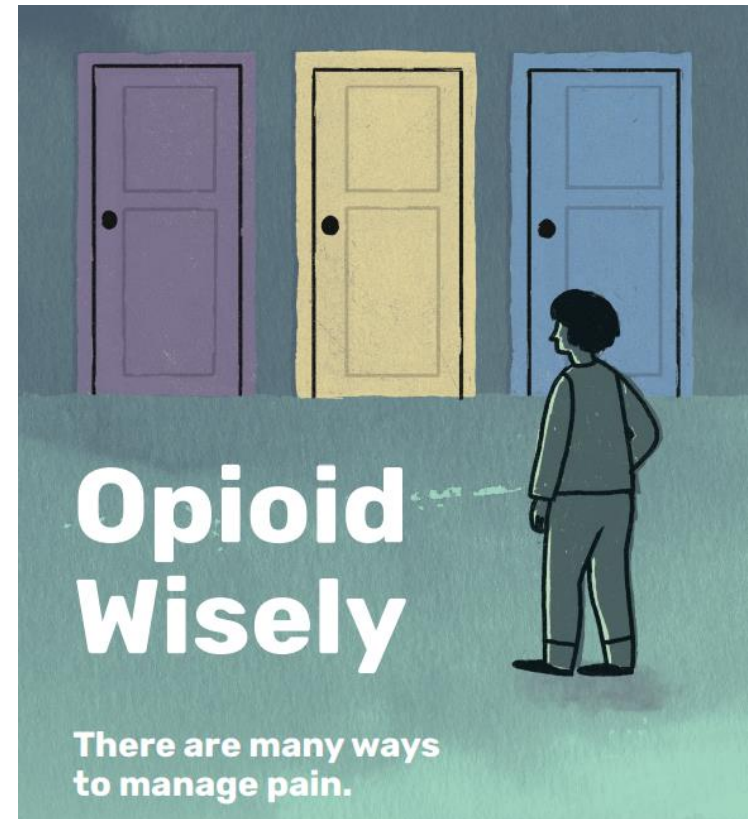
- Pain killers + sleeping pills + alcohol
- Antibiotics + cholesterol-lowering, BP, and heart medications
- Anti-inflammatories + blood thinners
- Anti-depressant combinations



# Common drug interactions

- **Pain killers +/- sleeping pills +/- alcohol**
  - Increase risk of:
    - Slowed breathing (respiratory depression)
    - Sedation
    - Falls
    - Confusion

**WED MAY 3 – MANAGING  
CHRONIC PAIN**



# At the pharmacy

- Be sure you are familiar with the names of your medications (brand and chemical/generic), what they are for, and how to take them

number

Prescr date

 **Local Pharmacy**  
123 MAIN STREET  
ANYTOWN, USA 11111 (800) 555-5555

DR C. JONES

NO 0060023-08291 DATE 06/23/09

**JANE SMITH**  
456 MAIN STREET ANYTOWN, US 11111

**TAKE ONE CAPSULE BY MOUTH THREE  
TIMES DAILY FOR 10 DAYS UNTIL ALL TAKEN**

**AMOXICILLIN 500MG CAPSULES**

QTY MRG  
NO REFILLS - DR. AUTHORIZATION REQUIRED

USE BEFORE 06/23/12  
SLF/SLF

Ph ONLY

Don't use this drug past this date

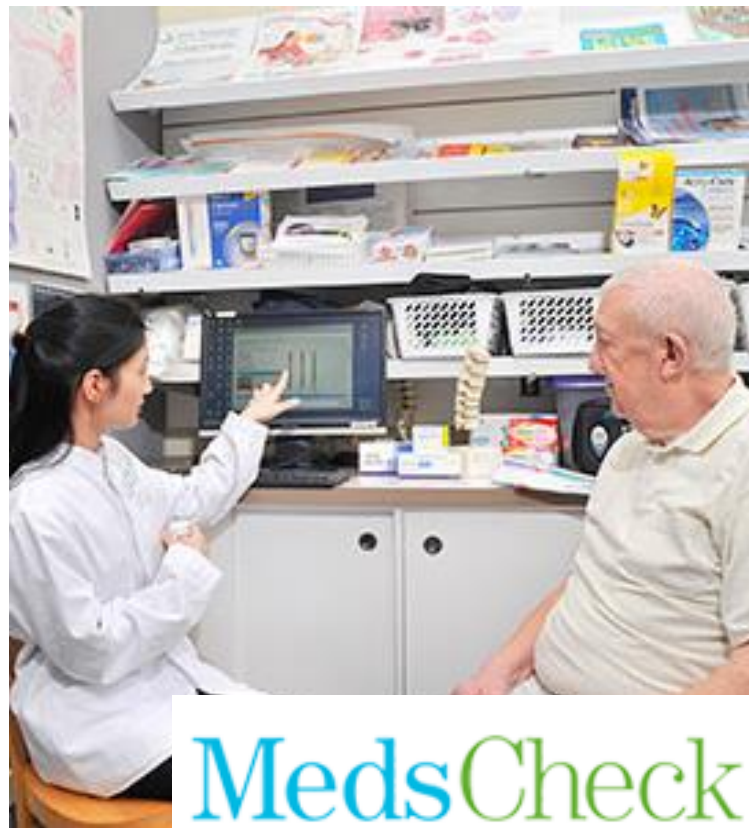
# At the pharmacy

- Check you medications before leaving the pharmacy
  - Is the right name on the vial?
  - Do you recognize the pills?



# At the pharmacy

- Set up an annual meeting with your pharmacist to review all your medications



MedsCheck

# At the pharmacy

- If you are on multiple medications and find it difficult to remember to take them as directed, ask your pharmacist about compliance packaging services available



# At the pharmacy

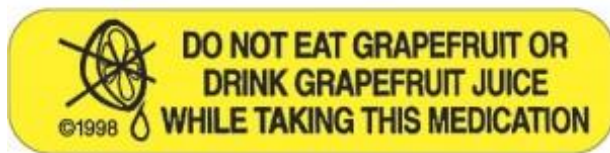
## Smart medication dispenser

- Dispenses the right pills when you need them
- Track medication dispensing and shares info with your loved ones
- Missed dose alerts



# At the pharmacy

- Consult with a pharmacist when selecting over-the-counter medications
- Grapefruit and dairy products are foods that commonly interact with medications
- If you are having difficulty opening safety caps, request for easy-open caps





# Conclusion

- Create or update your medication record
- Make sure you know what your medications are for, how to take them, common side effects, and how they interact with each other
- Notify your pharmacist if you believe you are having side effects from a medication
- Book an appointment with your pharmacist to review your medications

Questions?

