

Reviewing your medicines to make sure you are getting the best treatment

This leaflet is to help you understand why your health care professional (doctor, nurse or pharmacist) is reviewing the medicines you take to check they are still appropriate to treat your conditions.

Why do I need a structured medication review?

Medicines are prescribed to treat symptoms or diseases. When you are prescribed a medicine you should be given clear information on:

- How to take the medicine
- The possible side effects
- How long to take the medicine for and when to stop taking it, should you need to

The length of treatment can vary with different medicines, for example:

- Some medicines should only be taken short term for a few days to treat a particular condition such as antibiotics to treat a bacterial infection.
- Some medicines may need to be continued for a number of weeks or months and then stopped when symptoms are reduced or the disease is under control such as iron tablets for anaemia or painkillers for pain.
- For conditions, like asthma, diabetes and high blood pressure you may have to keep taking your medicines long term to keep the disease under control and prevent further complications.

It is good practice for your health care professional to regularly review the medicines you are taking. They should check that you are taking the medicine in the correct way. The review should also check to see that the medicine is treating the condition properly, that the medicine and dose is still right for you and that the medicine is not causing you any problematic side effects.

The review also provides an opportunity to discuss what you want to get out of the medicines you take. Your health care professional has the expertise around the medicines and you are the expert in you. Shared decision-making around your treatment should ensure the medication you take works well for you.

What do I need to bring to my structured medication review?

You need to bring all of the medicines that you are taking when you come for a review, including any you may purchase over the counter.

How can I prepare for my review?

Think about your medicines, how you take them, how they make you feel and write down notes to take with you to the review. You can also write down questions you want to ask or concerns you may have. Please be honest about what you are taking as this will help in the consultation.

If there someone who helps you take your medicines (for example, a family member, friend or carer), it may be helpful to bring them with you to your review.

What might happen at my review?

Your healthcare professional may suggest stopping a medicine because:

- Your health or a particular condition has improved or changed and the medicine is no longer needed.
- There are more side effects than benefits and the medicine is making you feel unwell.
- You have chosen not to take the medicine.
- You are not able to take the medicine.
- Other treatments that do not involve medicines are available and can be used instead.

Sometimes instead of stopping a medicine, your healthcare professional may reduce the dose or offer you a new or different medicine.

Your healthcare professional should always involve you in any decision about your medicines.

The decision to start or stop a medicine should be shared between you and your healthcare professional and be based on your individual medical needs, priorities and values.

Your next medication review is due on:	[add date and time]
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For more information about your rights as a patient and support to prepare for your structured medication review please visit:

NHS Constitution:

<http://www.nhs.uk/choiceintheNHS/Rightsandpledges/NHSConstitution/Pages/Overview.aspx>

Support for decisions on particular conditions is available on the NHS Shared Decision Making site: <https://www.england.nhs.uk/shared-decision-making/>

Top tips to prepare for a chat before your GP appointment:

<http://www.nhs.uk/NHSEngland/AboutNHSservices/doctors/Pages/questions-to-ask-the-doctor.aspx>