

Health

Taking medicines

It is very important to know how to take your medicine.

For prescribed medicines, you must follow the instructions that the doctor or pharmacist gives you.

For non-prescribed medicines ('over the counter'), you must make sure you read and understand the printed instructions.

Instructions printed on the packaging or container can be very basic. Instructions printed on the leaflet inside the box are more detailed and are usually presented under the following headings:

- * What the medicine is for
- * A brief description of the medicine and what it does
- * Before you take this medicine
 - * Who can safely take the medicine
 - * Who shouldn't take the medicine
 - * When you should seek further advice from your doctor or pharmacist
- * How to take the medicine
 - * Recommended dosage - how much/many you can take and how often
 - * When you should take the medicine
 - * What to do if you forget to take the medicine
 - * What to do if you take too much
- * Possible side effects
 - * A list of possible adverse reactions and what you should do if they occur
- * Storing the medicine
 - * Where and how you must keep the medicine
- * Further Information
 - * The medicine's ingredients
 - * What the medicine looks like
 - * The amount of medicine
 - * The manufacturer
 - * The leaflet's publication date