Prescription Labels

How to Read a Prescription Label
Prescription Labels are Important

- Prescription labels:
  - Show the name of the medication.
  - Show when and how to take the medication.
  - Show the pharmacy address.
  - Show the doctor’s name.
Prescription Labels also list:

- The person who is to take the medication.
- If a refill is needed.
- The prescription number.
- The date the medication was ordered.
- The expiration date.
Name of the Patient who Uses this Medication

• This is the name of the person who should take this medication.
• Make sure this is your name.
**Name of Medication**

- This is the name of the medication. This also shows the dosage.
Medication Instructions

• This shows how much medication to take. For example, one capsule.

• This also shows how to take the medication. For example, by mouth.
Medication Instructions

• This shows how often to take this medication. For example, 3 times daily.

• Ask your doctor or pharmacist to help you choose the best times to take your medication.
Medication Instructions

• This shows how long the medication should be taken. For example, “...for 10 days until all taken”.
Refills

• This shows if more medication is needed.
Pharmacy Location and Prescription Number

• This is the pharmacy address.

• This number is used by the pharmacy to identify the medication and to order refills.
Doctor’s Name

• This is the name of the doctor who ordered the medication.

• This is usually your doctor’s name.
Pharmacy Phone Number and Date of Order

• This is the pharmacy’s phone number. Call when you have questions.

• This is the date the medication was ordered.
Expiration Date

- This is the date when the medication expires.
- Do not take the medication after this date.
- Ask the pharmacist how to discard expired medication.

www.ddssafety.net  Last updated September 2010
Resources:
How to Read Prescription Labels

State of California, Department of Developmental Services, Direct Support Professional Training, Years 1 and 2, Student Guides
http://www.dds.cahwnet.gov/DSPT/Guides.cfm

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

EHow: How to Read Prescription Labels
http://www.ehow.com/how_5189768_read-prescription-labels.html

Print out the Prescription Label Quick Reference on the last slide for an easy-to-use reference tool!