

Dear Patient:

Healthcare has changed in dramatic ways. We have more specialized knowledge and technology than ever before. With constant advancements in healthcare and increased medical specialty practice, healthcare practitioners are more dependent on their patients keeping them up-to-date on changes in their medication therapy. Patients may take many different types of medications and see a number of specialists for their healthcare needs.

It is very important that you make all of your healthcare providers aware of all prescribed medications, over-the-counter medications, supplements and herbal medications you are taking. Doing so decreases the likelihood of a drug interaction occurring.

The **Medication Reconciliation Form** you received today can be a useful tool for you. The goal of medication reconciliation is to ensure the healthcare facility has a correct list of all of the medications that you take.

At the Saint Barnabas Outpatient Centers, we are proactive about patient safety. Thank you for your diligence in becoming an active partner in your healthcare.

Keep the form handy

Please keep this medication form with you, in your wallet or purse. Bring it when you see your doctors and health care providers.

It is important to keep this form current, revising it as medications are added or discontinued.

Remember, you are the most important member of your healthcare team!

The more educated you become about your own care, the better you are able to advocate for yourself.

Medication Safety Checklist

- Know why you are taking the medication prescribed for you.
- Make sure you understand how to take the medication as prescribed. For example, you should know:
 - ✓ if the medication can be cut or crushed,
 - ✓ if the medication must be taken with meals or on an empty stomach,
 - ✓ if you should avoid alcohol while taking the medication,
 - ✓ how often the medication should be taken
- When your doctor is about to prescribe medication, remind him/her about your allergies or any negative reactions you have had to medications in the past.
- Once you begin taking a medication, let your doctor know if you have any negative side effects. Don't stop taking a medication without speaking to your doctor first.
- Make sure any doctor who prescribes medications for you knows all of the other prescribed medications you take, as well as over-the-counter medications, supplements, vitamins, and herbal supplements.
- Carry your medication list (including prescribed, over the counter, supplements, herbal medications and any medication allergies you may have experienced) with you.

Offer it to every physician or healthcare provider you see and ask the provider to make a copy for your medical record.

Offer a copy to your pharmacy when you have a prescription filled

- Use your pharmacist as a resource! When you pick up your medications, make sure you understand all instructions on how to take it correctly, how the medication must be stored, if there are any potential interactions with any of your other medications or supplements, etc. Don't be afraid to ask questions!

Also, consult with your pharmacist if you notice a change in your medication's appearance.

- If you obtain all of your prescription medications from one pharmacy, the pharmacist may be able to detect potential adverse interactions between medications that have been prescribed for you.

