

# Deprescribing Medicines

## What is deprescribing?

**Deprescribing** means reducing or stopping medicines that may no longer be of benefit or may be causing harm. The goal of reducing or stopping certain medicines is to maintain or improve your quality of life.

## Why should I consider deprescribing some of my medicines?

You may have been taking certain medicines to stay healthy, improve a chronic condition, or prolong your life.


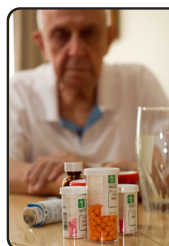
But, you may be putting yourself at increased risk of the harmful side effects of the medicines if you are:

- Taking too many medicines at the same time.
- Taking certain medicines longer than you need to. As you age, some medicines you are taking may start to affect you differently. Medicines that were good then, might not be the best choice now.

The above is especially true if you are 65 years of age or older. Research has shown that those over the age of 65 are hospitalized 5 times more often than those under the age 65, due to the harmful side effects of the medicines they are taking\*.

## What can I do?

- ☐ Learn about your medicines, including why you are taking them. You can always ask your pharmacist questions about your medicines at any time.
- ☐ Write the names of your medicines on a medicine log or ask your pharmacist for a list of all your medicines. Keep an updated list on you and on your fridge.
- ☐ If you are over the age of 65, review your medicines (prescription and non-prescription) with your doctor, pharmacist, or nurse practitioner at least once a year.
- ☐ Speak to your doctor, pharmacist, or nurse practitioner about deprescribing your medicine. Ask them:
  - Why am I taking this medicine?
  - What are the potential benefits and harms of this medicine?
  - Can it affect my memory or cause me to fall?
  - Can I stop or reduce the dose of this medicine? (that is, deprescribe?)
  - Who do I follow-up with and when?



**ALWAYS check with your doctor, nurse practitioner, or pharmacist BEFORE changing or stopping any of your medicines.**

\* Canadian Institute for Health Information, 2013