

Pre-Reading Discussion: How do you know what a medication might do to you if you take it? How do you know if you have an allergy to a medication? What do you do if a medication makes you sicker?

## Reading Passage Section 14: Information About Medications

To make good health decisions, you need to know when medications/drugs are safe and when they are dangerous.



Prescription and over-the-counter medications have written information on the medication container, the medication label, or on a separate piece of paper. It can be dangerous to your health if you don't understand the information about using prescription and over-the-counter medications. This includes:

- Information about what to do if you take too much medication.

- Information about **side effects**.

Side effects are what some medications can do to you. For example, some medications can make you vomit, give you diarrhea or make it hard for you to fall asleep.

Some side effects can be from allergies. For example, after one day of taking a medication, you may get a rash. If you think you have an allergy to a medication, you should stop taking the medication and call your doctor right away.

- Information about an **expiration date**.

An expiration date tells you how long you can keep the medication. After the expiration date, you should throw the medication out and not take it.

- Information about what is dangerous to do while using a medication.

For example, some medications make you sleepy. The instructions will tell you not to drive a car while using the medication. Other instructions may tell you not to drink alcohol while you are using a medication.

You can always ask the pharmacist or your health professional for more information about your medications.