

Polypharmacy Information Sheet

What is Polypharmacy?

Polypharmacy in aged care is when a person is taking 9 or more regular medicines.

This includes medicines that have been prescribed for you or bought from the pharmacy, supermarket, health food store, petrol station etc.

Why does it matter?

The more medicines you take the more likely you are to have side effects and sometimes you may not realise that your medicines, or the way your medicines affect each other could be causing the problem.

As we age, we are more likely to have chronic health problems that need medications. Sometimes we need all these medicines, and it may not be easy to stop them. As we get older our bodies change and so does the way our bodies react to our medicines. This can mean we are more likely to have side effects. Even though you might have been taking some of your medicines for years, we may still be able to stop them.

There are also some medicines that, for older people, might cause more harm than good. These medicines should be avoided where possible, but if you do need to take them, the lowest dose should be used, and you should be closely watched for side effects.

Side effects are often easy to deal with, but some may be harmful, making it more likely that you could have:

- Falls and fractures
- Problems with your memory or understanding
- Admissions to hospital
- Death

What will we be doing about this?

We have asked the WardMM Clinical Pharmacist team to help your GP to look at your medicines, making sure they remain the right choices,

are being used at the best dose for you and that you are being regularly checked for side effects.

A WardMM pharmacist may get in touch with you to talk about your medicines and health. Following a WardMM medication review, they will send suggestions to the GP, who may talk with you and your family about any suggested changes.

If you have any further questions, please don't hesitate to contact the Clinical Manager on site or a WardMM Clinical Pharmacist.



Need help? We can support you in the process, just get in touch:

Call us today: 1800 927 366 Send us an email: info@wardmm.com.au Find out more online: www.wardmm.com.au