



# PEP TALK



PULMONARY EDUCATION PROGRAM LITTLE COMPANY  
OF MARY HOSPITAL

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## Medication Mistakes: Take Extra Care With Your Prescriptions

*(By PERF Blog)*

Medication mistakes can cause illness, injuries, and even death. In the U.S. alone, hundreds of thousands of patients experience problems caused by taking the wrong medications, not taking them when needed, or taking more than what was prescribed. Among older patients, these mistakes pose a heightened risk, both because medications act differently on the body as a person ages, and because with age, compliance issues tend to arise. Older patients can be forgetful or confused and can inadvertently skip, double, or otherwise fail to take their medications as they've been directed. On top of these problems, it's been documented that a significant number of seniors forego their medications or cut down on their dosages because of concerns about their cost.

In addition to errors that can be caused by improperly taking prescription medicines, problems can be caused also by taking two medications that interact dangerously with one another. For example, you could take an over-the-counter drug containing acetaminophen without realizing that the prescription pain medication you've been prescribed also contains the same ingredient. This could result in a

total ingestion of acetaminophen at dangerous levels, raising the risk of liver damage.

Taking your medications in the right quantities and at the right times during the day, and with or without food as prescribed, is extremely important not only to treat your condition, but as a matter of basic safety. We urge you to renew your commitment to follow your doctor's prescriptions carefully and take whatever steps are necessary to avoid mistakes.

### Tips to Help You Take Your Medications Properly

First and foremost, be sure you're informed about the drugs that you're taking. If you don't understand, ask! Here's a checklist of questions to ask your doctor or pharmacist about the drugs that you're taking or that you've just been prescribed:

- What is the brand or generic name of the medication?
- What condition is the medication treating, and what will it do?
- What is the dose? How long should I take it?
- What should I do if I miss a dose?
- What should I do if I accidentally take more than the prescription says?

- Should I avoid any foods, drinks, other medications or activities while taking this medicine?
- What are the possible side effects? Which are minor, and which are serious?
- Will this new medication interfere with my other medication? If so, how?

Second, tell your doctor everything about the medications, herbs, vitamins, vaccines and supplements you're taking or that you took since the last time you had an office visit, whether prescribed or over-the-counter.

Finally, follow safety practices when you take your medications:

- It's easy to confuse eardrops and eye drops. If a medication says "otic," it's for the ears. If it says "ophthalmic," it's for the eyes.
- Do not chew a pill unless the instructions say to do so. If you chew a pill that's meant to be swallowed, it might not be absorbed properly.
- Similarly, don't cut pills, unless your doctor or pharmacist has told you to do so. Some pills are coated to prevent their immediate absorption; cutting them exposes the uncoated medicine to absorption the

minute you swallow the pill.

- Measure liquid medications correctly. Use an oral syringe or the dose cup that came with the medication, not a spoon from your kitchen.



## Oxygen Information Line

*(By Valeria Hatcher)*

The Pulmonary Fibrosis Foundation (PFF) has launched its Oxygen Information Line to provide reliable information and staffed by trained representatives who will answer questions and make sure people understand how to access oxygen, flow settings, how to use it safely, and what to do if they have a problem. The Oxygen Information Line, (844) 825-5733, is available Monday-Friday, 9 a.m.-5 p.m. CST. A new video on how to use supplemental oxygen can be found on the PFF's YouTube Channel.

The PFF also provides a Quick Start Guide for Supplemental Oxygen and the Traveling with Supplemental Oxygen Guide, both available for download. Print versions of the guides in Chinese, Spanish, and Russian also are available.

## Recap: Nixon Library

*(By Sarah Albright)*

On Thursday, June 28th, the PEP pioneers ventured out to Yorba Linda to spend the day at the Nixon Library. It was a perfect, sunny day to walk around the beautiful grounds. The library is surrounded by stunning flower gardens, a fountain, and even fruit trees.

The library was just upgraded with new technology and interactive dis-

plays to walk through Nixon's life. The museum displayed his personal life, as well as his presidential initiatives. Being young, I don't remember Nixon's presidential terms, so it was informative to read and learn about a few of his policy achievements. Some of them included: The Environmental Protection Agency; a \$100-million war on cancer; the establishment of OSHA; Title IX, a civil rights law preventing gender bias at colleges receiving federal aid; initiation of peaceful desegregation of southern schools; the welcoming of the astronauts of Apollo XI home safely from the moon; the lowering of the voting age from twenty-one to eighteen, and much more.



Outside the library stood the house Nixon was born and raised in, as well as the helicopter he flew in. After the tour we all enjoyed lunch together and some browsing of the gift shop. It was a fun and informative day!

## Looking Ahead



## Hawaiian Theme Luncheon

*(By Sarah Albright)*

The July Luncheon will have a Hawaiian theme this year and we

would like everyone to dress up! Wear your grass skirts, coconut bras and leis! There will not be any prizes for best costume, but it will still be fun! Dr. Casaburi will be the keynote speaker this month! It should be a great talk! Aloha!



## July Babies



2 Arlene Thomas	22 Renie Haleen
3 Donald Hill	22 Joseph Sakamaki
13 William Dukes	23 Freddie Hildreth
16 Gail Edwards	24 Pat Coldiron
20 Charles Hall	26 Mary Clark
21 Bob Rupkey	28 Homer Lowe

PEP PIONEERS is a non-profit corporation comprised of graduates of the Pulmonary Rehabilitation Program at Providence Little Company of Mary Hospital. We are dependent on private donations and fundraisers to finance events and purchase equipment that benefit all of its members.

Tax Deductible donations may be made to:

PEP PIONEERS

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