

Fortrose Medical Practice

Medicines Review – Important Information for Patients and Carers

Introduction

A medicines review is a meeting with your doctor, pharmacist or nurse to talk about your medicines. Your medicines should be reviewed regularly (usually once a year) to check that they are right for you.

Why are medicine reviews needed?

When you are first prescribed a medicine, your doctor, pharmacist and/or nurse checks that it is the best medicine for you. However, things can change, for example:

- You might have developed a side effect from the medicine.
- Your health might have changed, such as developing a long-term condition.
- You might have started taking other additional medicines.
- The guidelines for treating your condition might have changed.
- You may be taking a large number of medications (known as “Polypharmacy”).
- A medication you are on may be no longer essential for your health day to day.

All of these factors can affect whether a medicine remains the best choice for you.

What is “Polypharmacy”?

You might have heard people referring to polypharmacy. It means lots of medicines. A review is useful for people who take a lot of medicines, for these people their medicines review may be called a “Polypharmacy review”.

What happens at a medicine review?

The review will be carried out by a doctor or a pharmacist. They will ask you some questions and also look at your medical record; this will allow them to check you are on the medication which is right for you. They may also do some basic examinations if required e.g. blood pressure check.

The review will be between 15 and 30 minutes long. You will have the chance to ask any questions or raise any concerns you have about your medicines.

The doctor or pharmacist may suggest some changes to your medicines. They will explain these and why the change will benefit you.

These changes may include: a change to a new or different version of a medicine, changing the dose, changing the time of day you take your medicine or stopping a medicine.

Do I need to take anything to my medicine review?

It would be helpful if you could bring all of your medicines with you, including any you have bought in a pharmacy or shop. If you buy vitamins or herbal or homeopathic remedies, please bring them too.

What changes to my medicines might be recommended?

Some common changes your doctor, pharmacist, nurse might recommend to your medicines are:

- A medicine may be changed to a form that is easier to take (eg, once a day rather than three times a day).
- A medicine may be started or changed to a newer version.
- A medicine may be stopped.

Questions you may want to ask

If you and your doctor/pharmacist decide that one or more of your medicines should change, you may wish to ask some of the following questions:

- What is the medicine for?
- How and when do I take it and for how long?
- Are there any side-effects?
- What should I do if I become ill while taking this medicine?
- Do I need regular check-ups once I start this medication?

Can I bring someone with me?

You are welcome to bring along a family member or trusted friend to your medicines review if you feel it would be helpful.

Where can I get more information about my medicines?

- Your medical practice.
- Your local pharmacy
- NHS Inform – www.nhsinform.scot

