

Medication Safety: Storage and Summer Use

The following information is offered to help insure a healthy and safe summer

Safely Storing Medications

Some medications can become less effective when exposed to direct sunlight, heat, cold or moisture. Be especially careful during the summer months to carefully store medications properly.

General Storage Guidelines:

- Store medications that do not need refrigeration at room temperature below 86 degrees Fahrenheit
- Avoid storing medication in moist, humid areas
- Keep medication away from direct sunlight
- Do not place refrigerated medication in the freezer
- Store medications in their original containers
- Keep medication bottles tightly closed
- Discard expired medications according to facility policy

When in Doubt Throw Out:

- Medication may lose its potency because of improper storage or transport
- Medication should not be given when any of the following are observed:
 - A change in appearance or odor
 - A change in the consistency (i.e. tablets that crumble easily or capsules that are stuck together or crack)
 - Liquid suspensions that become cloudy or thick

Medications, Outings and the Sun

Photosensitivity and Commonly Used Medications

Numerous medications can cause a sensitivity to sunlight called Photosensitivity which can result in: 1) a rash-like condition, 2) severe burns and skin cell damage, 3) sunlight intolerance and 4) eye pain. Every medication should be evaluated for a possible sunlight intolerance.

Prolonged exposure to the sun should be avoided by individuals with a known sensitivity to the sun. Protective clothes, hats, sunglasses and sunscreen should be used when outside. When photosensitivity is suspected, discuss a medication change with a doctor.

Commonly Prescribed Medications Causing Sun Sensitivity

Benadryl	Dilantin
Elavil	Ibuprofen
Tegretol	Glucotrol
Bactrim	Capoten
Diabeta	Diabinese
Cipro	Lasix
Haldol	Claritin



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