

Self-Administration of Medicines in Hospital

Information for patients



What is self-administration of medicines?

Self-administration is where you take some or all your medicines yourself while in hospital rather than being given them by a nurse.

Why might I want to administer my own medicines while I am in hospital?

Administering your own medicines in hospital might help you to:

- Be more active in your own care.
- Remember to take your medicines when needed.
- Take your medicines safely.
- Be better prepared for going home.

How does the self-administration of medicines work?

The ward team will explain exactly what self-administration of medicines involves.

The level of self-administration will depend on your current understanding of your medicines. The ward team will help you assess this and can give medicines education first if needed.

Where will my medicines be stored?

The storage of medicines will be different dependent on what ward area you are in.

In some areas medicines will be stored in a single locked storage room on the ward while in other areas you will be given a secure space to store your medicines. The ward team will discuss this with you.

How will I know what medicines to take?

We will supply all the medicines that you may need. Your supply of medicines will be individually labelled with dosage instructions and times for you.

If needed, you can be given a chart that tells you all the medicines you are taking and when to take them.

What does medicines education involve?

During the programme the nurse or one of the pharmacy team will explain your medicines to you more fully. This will help you understand:

- Any changes to your medicines while you have been in hospital.
- The medicines you are taking and what they are used for.
- How much and how often you should be taking your medicines.
- Common side effects and what to do if they occur.

Are there any medicines that I can't self-administer while in hospital?

You can take most medicines yourself but there are a few exceptions. This depends on how some medicines are given and how some medicines are stored. The ward team will let you know what these medicines are if you have been prescribed them.

What are my responsibilities?

In some areas you may be responsible for keeping your medicines safe and for returning any medicines keys when you leave hospital. You will be asked to sign a consent form which will explain this a little more.

What if I no longer want to self-administer my medicines in hospital?

If you decide not to continue self-administering your medicines, let the nurse know. The nurse can then give you your medicines in the usual way. The ward team will also check on your condition while you are in hospital. If for any reason you are no longer able to self-administer your medicines, the nurse will give you them instead.

Further questions?

You can speak to any member of the ward team. They will be able to help if you have any queries about your medicine or about self-administration.

