

Medications: The Good, The Bad, and The Ugly

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Supporters

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 - Rochester Recreation Club for the Deaf (“REAP”)
 - Deaf Health Community Committee (DHCC)



Goals of Presentation

- Medication importance
- Potential dangers of medications
- Generics versus brand name medications
- Vitamins, supplements, and herbs
- Question & Answer Time



Medications

- The right medication can:
 - Cure your disease
 - Manage your disease better
 - Improve your quality of life
- The wrong medication can:
 - Cause worse health and even death
 - Can cause bad symptoms



Life Saving Medication Examples

- Antibiotics (e.g. penicillin)
 - Reduced deaths from bacterial infections
- Aspirin
 - Reduced deaths from heart attacks and strokes
- Statins (e.g. atorvastatin)
 - Reduced deaths from heart attacks and strokes



The Dangers of Medications

- Over 40,000 Americans died from poisoning from legal or illegal drugs
 - More died from drugs than car crashes
 - 40% of these deaths were from use or misuse of narcotics (strong pain relievers) alone!
 - Most deaths from medications are from medication errors or inappropriate use
 - Key to staying healthy is to know your medications and to follow directions



Dangerous Medications

- **Warfarin (blood thinners)**
- Diuretics (water pills)
 - Can cause low potassium levels
- Thyroid replacement (e.g. Synthroid)
 - Monitor levels
 - Take with empty stomach
 - Avoid taking with vitamins, calcium, iron
- Erectile dysfunction meds (e.g. Viagra)
 - Avoid taking with nitroglycerin
 - Vision issues



Dangerous Medications

- **Pain medications**
- Hormone replacement therapy/OCP
 - Caution if you smoke or older than 35- higher rates of blood clots
- Statins (e.g. Lipitor)
 - Liver monitoring is required
 - Avoid high amounts of grapefruit
- **Antibiotics**
- Digoxin- blood work needed to monitor levels



Blood Thinners

- Used for people at high risk for blood clots and stroke
 - Atrial fibrillation or clotting disorders
 - Blood thinner can save lives from blood clots but may also cause harm from bleed risk
- Warfarin (Coumadin)
 - Medication can interfere with other medications
 - Requires regular blood monitoring
 - Vitamin K rich foods can reduce amount of warfarin
 - Broccoli, cabbage, kale, dark greens, spices, herbs



Blood Thinners- continued

- Newer medications
 - Pradaxa (dabigatran)
 - Eliquis (apixaban)
- May be more effective than warfarin
- No blood monitoring needed
- Little data showing if medication is safe to use for long term



Pain Medications

- Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs)
 - Advil (ibuprofen)- max 1800-2400 mg daily
 - Aleve (naproxen)- max 1000 mg daily
 - Can increase blood pressure and heart attack risk
 - Can cause stomach bleeding and irritation
 - Avoid if you have poor kidney function or issues



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Pain Medications

- Tylenol (acetaminophen)
 - Avoid taking more than 2400 mg daily
 - Avoid if you have liver problems
 - Overdose can cause liver failure



Pain Medications

- Narcotics
 - Vicodone (hydrocodone)
 - Oxycontin (oxycodone)
 - Percocet (oxycodone)
 - Dilaudid (hydromorphone)
 - Codeine
 - Can cause severe constipation (can't poop)
 - Overdose can kill!
 - Can cause dependency and addiction!



Antibiotics

- Can be used to treat severe bacterial infections
 - Examples include: pneumonia, cellulitis, urinary tract infection
- Does not treat viruses!
- Most of the time, no antibiotics are needed to treat an infection



Antibiotics

- Resistance
 - Overuse/ Improper use/ Too old
 - Methicillin Resistant Staph Aureus (MRSA)
 - Poor response to antibiotics
- Superimposed infections
 - Yeast infections
 - Clostridium difficile colitis
- Partial dosing-leads to resistance



Side effects vs Allergies

- Side effects (unwanted response)
 - GI effects (nausea, vomiting, diarrhea)
 - Abnormal labs
 - Cognitive (fatigue, confusion)
- Allergy (immune controlled)
 - Rash
 - Shortness of breath
 - Swelling



Pediatric Dosing

- Use of liquid measurements
 - 5 cc equals one teaspoon
 - 15 cc equals one tablespoon
- Weight based
- Age based
- Cold remedies



sailusfood.com



Brand names vs Generics

- Brand names
 - Large pharmaceutical companies
 - Heavy advertising (media and samples)
 - More costly
- Generics
 - Smaller pharmaceutical companies
 - Little or no advertising
 - Cheaper
 - Mostly similar effect

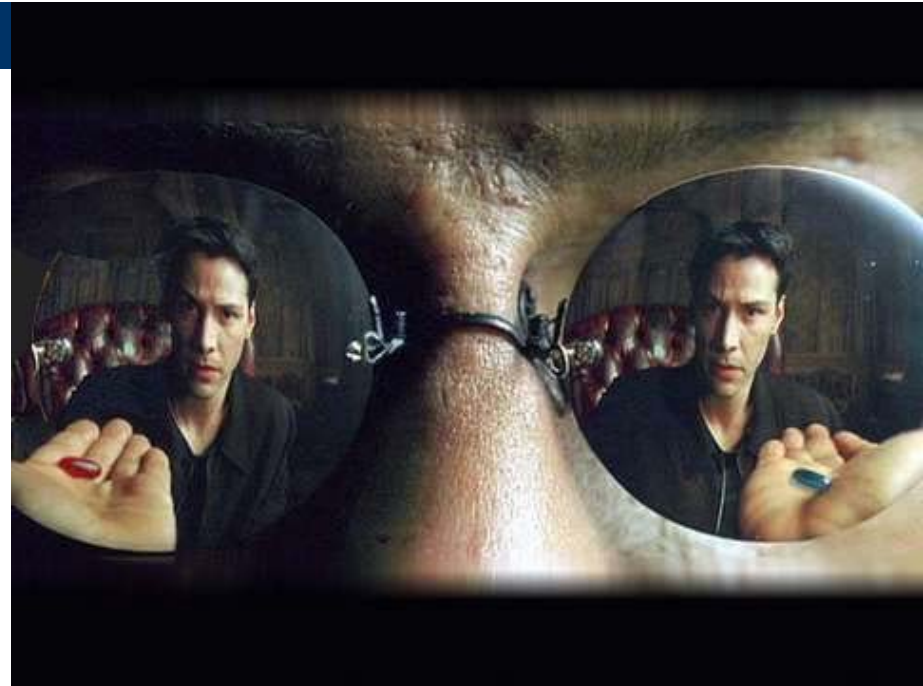


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Red pill vs Blue pill

- Color is not a dependable way to know which medication you have
- Keep an updated medication list
- Bring medications with you
- Pill cutting?

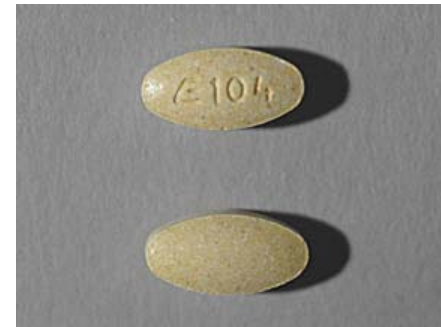
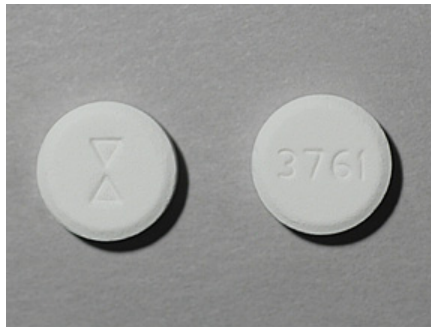


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Pill Variations

- Lisinopril (common blood pressure medication) has 54 different pill types



Medications and Food Interactions

- There are few types to be aware of:
 - Grapefruits
 - Statins
 - Blood pressure medications
 - Seizure medications
 - High Vitamin K foods
 - Warfarin



Taking Medications Safely

- Work with your doctor
 - Bring all of your medications, vitamins and herbs you are taking at each appointment
 - Talk with your doctor before you make any medication changes
 - Certain medications may help you in multiple ways
 - Let your doctor know as early as you can that you need more medications ordered



Taking Medications Safely

- Vitamins and herbs are drugs too!
 - They may help but they also can harm
 - Eat a varied diet with plenty of vegetables, fruits, and herbs to get more benefits from these foods than in a pill form (“symbiosis”)



Herbs

- Important info about herbs
 - Kava kava (anxiety)
 - Can harm the liver
 - St. John's Wort (used for depression)
 - Can interfere with many medications including blood thinners
- Getting ready for surgery- many herbs can increase bleeding risk
 - Garlic, ginseng, echnicaea, fish oil (not herb)



Vitamins

- A single multi-vitamin is ok to take daily
 - If eat a healthy diet, no need for vitamins
 - Cost issues
 - Hot water and vinegar test
 - If pill does not dissolve within 2 hours, your body doesn't absorb it well



Important Vitamins

- Vitamin D (sunshine vitamin)
 - Helps keep bones strong and may help with cancer and heart prevention
 - Everyone should take Vitamin D3 800-2000 IU daily
 - Sunscreen and female make-up block our ability to make vitamin D
 - Sunlight is also reduced by: 1) Air pollution; 2) Darker skin; 3) Winter time; 4) Cloudy days



Important Vitamins and supplements

- Calcium
 - Helps to keep bones strong
 - Females should take 1200-1500 mg daily
- Fish Oil
 - Can help with heart prevention for older individuals
 - Ask doctor if you should take this and how much



Other Vitamins and supplements

- Iron

- Important for young females who have their menses (“periods”)
- Iron from diet is usually enough
- Some may need iron supplements
- Avoid long term use



Questions???

- Thank you!
- Next Deaf Health Talk will be on September, 2012

