

Pharmacy Department

Self administration of medicines

What is self-administration?

Self-administration of medicines (known as SAM) is a programme used on this ward to help you to maintain your independence in taking your medicine and to improve your knowledge about your medication where required. This may help you to cope more easily with your medication once you get home.

If you self-administer in hospital, it gives you the opportunity to take your own tablets either independently or under supervision. In order to do this your nurse and the pharmacist will give you as much information, help and supervision as you need. Every day we will ask you how you are getting on and check that you remain fit and well enough to continue to self-administer your medicines.

What are the benefits of self-administration?

Through this programme we aim to help you to:

- Maintain your independence with taking your medicine.
- Understand the purpose of your medicines.
- Understand how to take your medicines safely.
- Understand more about your condition and general health.

Who can I talk to about self-administration?

Before you take part in this programme you will have the chance to discuss with your nurse exactly what self-administration involves and what the possible benefits will be for you. You can also speak to the ward pharmacy staff about your medicines and the self-administration scheme.

Can I choose not to self-administer?

Self-administration is not compulsory and you should not feel that you have to take part.

What should I expect to happen if I take part?

If you are asked and agree to take part, then before starting a nurse or a pharmacist will, where appropriate:

- Explain self-administration to you more fully.
- Explain which medicines you will be taking.
- Explain the dosage.
- Explain any possible side effects.

You may also be supplied with an information sheet that lists all the medicines you are taking, together with a brief description of what they are for so that you can use this as a reminder.

Your own medicines from home will be used where suitable. Any other regular or new medicines that you require will be given to you from the hospital pharmacy. Each

container will be labelled with your name, the name of the medicine, and instructions on how to take it as appropriate.

If you forget what medicines you have taken or if you have any queries then please talk to your nurse.

What are my responsibilities whilst self-administering?

- Keep your medicines locked in the appropriate cabinet, and keep the key safe.
- Check the prescription chart or tick chart for any changes before taking each dose.
- After taking each dose, initial the appropriate box on the prescription chart, or tick the appropriate box on the tick chart.
- Inform your nurse/doctor/pharmacist if anything is unclear, or if you suspect anything is incorrect.
- Only take the medicines we have prescribed for you.
- Ask your nurse for any 'as required' medicines, injections, or other medicine to which you do not have access.
- Inform your nurse or doctor if you need to take increasing amounts of 'as required' medication.
- Alert your nurse/pharmacist/pharmacy technician if your supply of any medicines becomes low.
- Return the key to your medicine locker to your nurse before you go home.

How will my medicines be kept safe?

Your medicines will be kept secure in the metal box attached to your bedside locker. You will be given a key to this locker when you are taking your medication independently (the nurse, pharmacist and pharmacy technician will be the only other people with access to your medication).

It is your responsibility to keep your medicines locked in your medicine cabinet and to keep the key in a safe place.

If any visitor or patient tries to take your medicines, please call a nurse at once.

What happens when I go home?

A prescription will be written and the medicines in your locker will be checked against it by Pharmacy.

Please remember to give the key to your medicine cabinet to your nurse before going home.



Addenbrooke's is smoke-free. You cannot smoke on site. For advice on quitting, contact your GP or the NHS smoking helpline free, 0800 169 0 169

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