

Pharmacist assessments: What you need to know

Why is my pharmacist asking me about my medications?

Among other things, your pharmacist is here to support you in managing drug therapy. Your pharmacist considers a variety of information to determine if drug therapy is safe and effective for you including:

- the conditions you are treated for,
- the symptoms you are experiencing,
- medications you are taking,
- laboratory results, and
- lifestyle factors.

Your pharmacist's goal is to ensure that you get the right medications to achieve your health goals and support you in using them properly, while minimizing the possibility and impact of unwanted effects.

Pharmacists are an important part of your healthcare team and, as outlined in our Standards of Practice for Pharmacists and Pharmacy Technicians, pharmacists work collaboratively with other health professionals, such as physicians, to help ensure you receive the most appropriate treatment for you. Often, this includes discussion about other health and lifestyle measures. Sometimes, the answer may be not using medications at all.

I've heard a lot about opioids lately. Why are opioid medications a concern?

Opioid medications are used to treat certain types of severe pain, most often when treating pain resulting from surgery or cancer. If pain results from other causes, there may be other alternatives that work better or have less risk associated with them. If opioids are not needed, they should be avoided, as the longer they are taken, the more risk may be associated with them.

Anyone taking an opioid medication can develop dependence over time. This is a known risk of the medication, and is not the fault of individuals using them.

Questions?

Pharmacists are medication management experts. Discuss your health and medication needs with your pharmacist. If you require additional privacy, ask to have your discussion in a private location at the pharmacy.

For more information on our Standards of Practice for Pharmacists and Pharmacy Technicians and our opioid guidelines, please visit abpharmacy.ca