# What is a senior care pharmacist?

Pharmacists help dispense medications and also provide instructions on how to best use them. A senior care pharmacist, also called a consultant pharmacist, is a pharmacist who knows a lot about how medications work in older adults. They also understand how medications can affect patient's health. That knowledge is used to provide expert advice to older adults, their caregivers, and the healthcare team on the safe use of medications.

## HOW CAN THEY HELP?

There are lots of things to consider when looking at a person's health. That includes reviewing the current medical conditions, nutrition, types of medication, and lots more. Senior care pharmacists review all that and look at the big picture of the role medication plays in a person's overall health.

This process involves a constant review of prescribed medications. This allows senior care pharmacists to identify any health risks and recommend other solutions, including stopping any unnecessary medications. The goal is to reduce medication-related problems, leading to a healthier patient.

## WHAT SERVICES CAN THEY PROVIDE?

When you invite a senior care pharmacist onto your health care team, you can expect the following:

- **A complete review of a person's medication plan**. That includes looking at prescription and over-the-counter medications, dietary supplements, and herbal products. Senior care pharmacists can help determine whether the product is necessary, dosed correctly, safe for the patient, and affordable.
- **Identification of untreated or undertreated health concerns** and any treatment recommendations.
- **A review of potential side effects of medications**. Also, a review of any possible drug, food, or disease interactions.
- **A basic health assessment**. That includes a check of a person's weight, blood pressure, glucose levels, and cholesterol levels. All those are things that can affect one's medications. They are also early indicators for future health problems. Senior care pharmacists can adjust edications based on those test results. They can also provide advice on how to meet or reach healthy test results.
- **A home visit**, during which a senior care pharmacist will visit a patient at home. During the visit, the senior care pharmacist will provide medication assistance. A senior care pharmacist can also identify any possible places where a patient could potentially fall down.
- **Medication management knowledge** for all those on a clinical team. Senior care pharmacists can educate the health care team on the best medication uses and practices. They take many continuing education courses to make sure they know about the latest medication practices and policies. They are also encouraged to become board certified.

Interested in learning how to bring a senior care pharmacist onto your health care team? Check out the American Society of Consultant Pharmacists (ASCP) Foundation's Senior Care Pharmacist Directory. You can search for senior care pharmacists listed in your state at HelpWithMyMeds.org.

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