Choosing Medications Wisely

The rising cost of prescription and specialty medications is alarming. The most recent example of how expensive these types of medications can be is the price hike of the life-saving EpiPen, which now costs more than $600 for one pack of two EpiPens.

If you take prescription medication, using the following strategies can help you become a wiser health care consumer and save you money:

- **Shop around**—Drug prices are not the same at every pharmacy. You may be able to save money by shopping around.

- **Ask about drug substitution**—When your doctor prescribes a drug, ask if a cheaper alternative is available or if an over-the-counter drug will work just as well.

- **Consider using a generic version of your prescription drug**—Generic medications work just as well as brand-name drugs and can cost up to 80 percent less.

- **Look into discount card programs**—Some drugstore chains offer discount prescription cards that provide additional discounts on your prescriptions for a small monthly or annual fee.

7 Tips for avoiding the Cold or Flu

- Get vaccinated against the flu
- Wash your hands often
- Limit exposure to infected people
- Keep stress in check
- Eat right
- Sleep right
- Exercise
Important Updates: 2016 Flu Vaccine

As the 2016-2017 flu season approaches, now is a great time to get vaccinated against the flu. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends that everyone 6 months of age and older get a flu vaccine.

Unlike their recommendations during past flu seasons, the CDC and the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) are not recommending the nasal spray vaccine, FluMist, for the 2016-2017 season due to concerns over its effectiveness, especially in children. The CDC and AAP are now only recommending the injectable flu vaccine.

Some flu shots protect against three flu viruses while others protect against four viruses. Consult your physician to determine which shot is best for you. If you don’t have a regular doctor, you can get a flu vaccine at a local health department, pharmacy or urgent care clinic.

Getting an annual flu vaccine is the first and, arguably, the best way to protect your family during the flu season. For more information on the 2016-2017 vaccine, click here.

Effectiveness of Flu Vaccines

FluMist Nasal Vaccine

Injectable Flu Vaccine

Source: USDA