



What are side effects?

Side effects are symptoms or feelings you have when taking a medicine that aren't related to what the medicine is supposed to do. Many side effects are not serious and go away on their own; others can be more bothersome and even dangerous.

Here are some examples of side effects:

- You are taking a medicine to help you breathe, but it also upsets your stomach
- You are taking a medicine for pain, but it also makes your mouth dry

How can I find out about side effects or safety concerns for my drug?

To learn about side effects or safety concerns for your drug, read either the drug label or the drug's package insert. Most prescription medicines have Web sites where you can find information about side effects, too.

You may also want to speak with your pharmacist or healthcare provider (HCP). Keep track of side effects to help your HCP know how your body is responding to a medicine.

Source: U.S. Food and Drug Administration, "As You Age: You and Your Medicines" and "Side Effects: Questions and Answers." Available at www.fda.gov. Accessed March 3, 2010.