

KEEPING YOUR HEALTH

I would like to introduce myself. I am a friend of Lillian and Genevieves who you have known throughout the years and have today given you great advice - better than I can give you.

My concern with many others is the over medication of seniors.

As you well know, we often have bad reactions to new prescriptions. I am happy to say that the medical profession have now recognized this and Pharmacare will offer seniors a 7 - 10 day trial sample of drugs, free of charge. We can return to the pharmacist to have our prescriptions filled if we want to continue taking the pills. If you do have side effects, please discuss with your doctor.

The trial sample prescriptions will be available to consumers covered by Pharmacare for the first time.

There was a pilot project started in 1993 and it showed many seniors did not want to continue taking drugs beyond the first week. Half the people did not come back to fill their prescriptions which proved that drugs prescribed were never used. This waste costs millions of dollars each year.

The taking of pills can be a vicious circle. We start complaining about a small ache that won't go away and the doctor prescribes an anti-inflammatory, like aspirin, and this starts trouble in the stomach and then we get pills for that and for every new ache the doctor prescribes a new pill.

It is a cycle that makes us sicker and drug companies richer.

B.C. Health officials say that there can be as many as 10,000 drug related admissions in B.C. each year. The majority involving prescription drugs. We, the consumer should shoulder some of the responsibility. We have to be careful to take as directed and never, never pass pills onto family and friends.

They give us a pill for arthritis, a pill for your heart, a pill for your gout, a pill for your ulcers and then something for your sleep.

While some of us need all these pills, many don't.

We have to waken up to the limits and dangers of usage of pills.

It has been proved that some senior patients were given more than 150 prescriptions per year.

People who start out with a sleeping disorder or problem, end up with a drug dependency. We grow so dependent on them we keep increasing the dose and trying new varieties.

The Health booklet to note your blood pressure, etc. that I know Lillian has been promoting with your wellness in mind, could also be used to detail what and when medications were prescribed and could be used by you, as a reminder. It would be our responsibility to ensure the booklet was presented and completed by the pharmacist as each prescription is filled.

This could be beneficial for us to ask why we are getting the medication and for what purpose, what effects to expect and what to do if any unexpected reactions take place.

In closing I believe that the person who says "I don't want to take any medications unless its absolutely necessary", has got the healthiest attitude.

Thank you for your time.