

## Tip: Prescription Medications and Patient Safety

**The Risk:** Medication errors result in a significant portion of medical liability claims. Patient harm can result from known risks, adverse or allergic reactions, drug interactions, and errors in prescribing. Careful attention to detail in prescribing and monitoring the use of medications promotes patient health and safety.

### Recommendations:

1. Physicians must discuss the indications, risks, benefits, and alternatives of prescription medication with their patients and document these discussions in the medical record.
2. The patient's allergy history should be reviewed prior to prescribing.
3. Allergies/sensitivities should be documented in a highly visible and pertinent part of the record.
4. Medication reconciliation should be performed on a routine basis, including the use of herbal supplements and over-the-counter drugs. Patients should be encouraged to bring a list of medications or actual prescription bottles to their visit(s) to facilitate this process.
5. Written consent should be obtained for high-risk medications such as allergy shots, joint injections, fertility medications, chemotherapy, etc.
6. The blood levels/side effects of certain medications should be monitored with laboratory and/or diagnostic tests as indicated. Test results should be reviewed, and adjustments made as necessary.
7. Discontinuance of or a change in medication(s) should be documented in the medical record, including the rationale for the change.
8. Patient visit intervals should be established for the continuance of prescription medications.

## MEDICATION MANAGEMENT

## CHECKLIST

### PRESCRIPTION MEDICATIONS & PATIENT SAFETY

Medication errors result in a significant portion of medical liability claims. Patient harm can result from known risks, adverse or allergic reactions, drug interactions, and errors in prescribing. Careful attention to detail in prescribing and monitoring the use of medications promotes patient health and safety.

	YES	NO
1. Providers discuss the indications, risks, benefits, and alternatives of prescription medication with their patients and document these discussions in the medical record.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Medication reconciliation is performed on a routine basis, including the use of herbal supplements and over-the-counter drugs. Patients are encouraged to bring a list of medications or actual prescription bottles to their visit(s) to facilitate this process.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. The patient's allergy history is reviewed prior to prescribing.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Allergies/sensitivities are documented in highly visible and pertinent parts of the record.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Discontinuance of or a change in medication(s) is documented in the medical record, including the rationale for the change.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Written consent is obtained for high risk medications such as allergy shots, joint injections, fertility medications, chemotherapy, etc.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. The blood levels/side effects of certain medications are monitored with laboratory and/or diagnostic tests as indicated. Test results are reviewed and adjustments made as necessary.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Patient visit intervals are established for the continuance of prescription medications.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>