

What you need to know about deprescribing

Are older Canadians taking too many meds?



2 out of 3 Canadians over age 65 take at least 5 prescription medications.



1 out of 4 Canadians over age 65 takes at least 10 prescription medications.

(CIHI, 2018)

What is deprescribing?

When too many medications are taken, deprescribing is a solution. Deprescribing means reducing or stopping medications that may not be beneficial or may be causing harm.

The goal of deprescribing is to maintain or improve quality of life.

Why deprescribe?

Taking medications may be necessary for health, improving symptoms or prolonging life. However:



Things change

As we age, medications affect us differently. Medications that were good then, may not be the best choice now.



Medication may cause harm

The risk of harmful effects and hospitalizations increases when taking multiple medications.



Seniors are more at risk

They are hospitalized five times more often than people under age 65 because of harmful medication effects.

(CIHI, 2013)

Risky meds are good candidates for deprescribing



Medications are considered risky when the risks outweigh the benefits, and safer drug or non-drug therapy can be used to treat the same condition.



Older women are typically more susceptible to harmful effects of medications and more likely to be prescribed risky meds.



Always check with your doctor, pharmacist or nurse before changing or stopping any of your medications.