

❖ STORAGE OF MEDICATIONS

So many people tell me that they keep their medicines in the fridge even if they don't have to, which always makes me wonder where else do people store them!

There are some basic tips to store your medicines to make sure they are not disintegrated, moist, denatured or even become toxic by the excess heat! You also need to consider who else is in your house and who may come in contact with your medicines;

- × Are they young children; how high can they climb?
- × Are they teenagers that may want to 'try' your pills for fun?
- × Are they elderly people that can't see the label clearly and take your medicines instead of their own?
- × Are you having renovations or work done in your house and will these people have access to your medicines?

For all these reasons and more, there are a few 'tips' when storing your medicines to reduce any 'incidences' or affect the quality of them;

- ✓ Don't store your medicines in the fridge unless they specifically need to like some eye-drops and Insulin; they can become moist and help to break-down the medication. As well as this, you kids might think they are lollies or may be fun or funny to try your medications and it can be serious.
- ✓ Don't store your medicines in the bathroom. All the moisture and humidity from the water can cause your medicines to breakdown and not work as well. Also, children or teenagers can lock the door behind them and potentially misuse them for 'fun' or a 'thrill' and you may just think they are taking a bath. It can be very dangerous
- ✓ Don't store your medicines in your bedside tables, because it is too easy for other people to access them.
- ✓ Don't keep your medicines in the car (dashboard, glove-box) as they can get really hot and reduce the effects of the medication. You shouldn't keep them somewhere where people can see them, because they may break-in to try and take them if they are desperate!
- ✓ Don't keep your medicines in the freezer
- ✓ You should keep your medicines in a cool, dark and dry cupboard below 25 degrees Celsius that is very high and is fitted with a lock that only you have access to. If there are elderly people that also take medications, keep theirs in a separate area of the shelf, and use a high-lighter to draw attention to their medications. You can also ask your pharmacist if they can print bigger on the label to help them read it more clearly.
- ✓ Don't 'hoard' your medicines; get them filled when you need them so you don't have a huge stash of medicines in your house. Try to get rid of expired or unused medicines at your pharmacy so they can destroy them safely
- ✓ Always check the expiry date before taking any medicine, as time flies and it is easy to lose track and possibly even throw away the newer dated stock than the older one!
- ✓ Make sure all eye-drops are discarded after 28 days of opening them
- ✓ Don't keep any aerosols or inhalers in direct sunlight or excessive heat