

Medication Management Quiz - Answer Key

1. Generally, how many medications need to be used per day to be defined as polypharmacy?

5 or more

2. List six potential symptoms caused by polypharmacy (answers could be among these):

- **Fatigue, sleepiness or decreased alertness**
- **Constipation, diarrhea or incontinence**
- **Loss of appetite**
- **Confusion**
- **Falls**
- **Weakness**
- **Tremors**
- **Hallucinations**
- **Anxiety or excitability**
- **Dizziness**
- **Depression**

3. What two common conditions of aging make medication self-management difficult?

visual impairment and low dexterity

4. List seven strategies or tools that can be used to help geriatric patients better manage multiple medications:

Answers will vary - see Answer Key page 2

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	Strategies for Assisting with Geriatric Medication Management
Medication Reconciliation	• <u>Keep a current list of all medications</u> • <u>Review all medications with your physician</u> • <u>Ask for a screening of adverse drug reactions</u>
Medication Procurement	• <u>Assess the patient's ability to procure medications</u> • <u>Assist with identifying a way to procure medications</u> • <u>Refer to a social worker if funds are a problem, or consider the use of generic equivalents</u>
Medication Knowledge	• <u>Assess the patient's understanding of dosage, frequency, special instructions and side effects</u> • <u>Implement interventions including written instructions in large print, list format, schedules or charts, etc.</u>
Physical Ability	• <u>Assess for manual dexterity or visual impairment</u> • <u>Use a pill box or easy to open container</u> • <u>Make use of a medication calendar</u> • <u>Use non-childproof containers</u> • <u>Consult with the pharmacist if tablet breaking is difficult for your patient</u>
Cognitive Capacity	• <u>Determine the patient's cognitive ability to organize and remember medication</u> • <u>Use memory cues – same 'clock time', meal time, daily ritual, etc.</u> • <u>Use memory-enhancing methods such as med chart, electronic reminder, voice message, pill box, electronic dispensing device</u>
Intentional Nonadherence	• <u>Assess the reason for nonadherence</u> • <u>Educate patient on the risks of missing medication</u> • <u>Provide positive reinforcement</u>
Ongoing Monitoring	• <u>Monitor adherence if possible – over and under adherence</u> • <u>Monitor side effects</u> • <u>Notify the prescribing provider if signs and symptoms of the condition remain, or for any present side effects</u>