

BERWITZ & DiTATA LLP

Attorneys and Counselors at Law

310 Old Country Road Suite 101
Garden City, New York 11530
Telephone (516) 747-3200 • Facsimile (516) 747-3727

Lawrence N. Berwitz

Maureen R. DiTata

Helping Our Loved Ones Manage Medication

As our loved ones age, their ability to manage their medication may be compromised - by age, illness, poor memory, failing eyesight or otherwise. The greater the number of medications, the higher the likelihood that they may become overwhelmed or make mistakes. These mistakes can be life-threatening. According to the U.S. Surgeon General, medication non-adherence is a problem that causes more than one-third of medicine-related hospitalizations and nearly 125,000 U.S. deaths each year. Here are some tips to ensure that your loved one is safe when it comes to medication:

- Maintain a list of all of the medications that your loved one is taking. This list should include prescription and non-prescription medications, the time of day that each is taken and the dosage. It may be helpful to include a physical description of each medication.
- Put a copy of the list in your loved one's wallet and in your own. In case of an emergency it is always better if the list can be readily accessed.
- Check labels for accuracy in patient name, medication, dosage and expiration dates.
- Establish a system to organize medication and dosage, such as a weekly pill box set or electronic dispenser.
- Inquire of the physician or pharmacist about restrictions, interactions or customary side effects.
- Make sure your loved one visits his or her primary care physician at least annually. Bring the list of medications and review it with the doctor.