

**Taking Charge: Good Medical Care for the Elderly
and How to Get It**

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APPENDIX J

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Appendix J

Medications and Patient Characteristics That Place Elders at Risk for Adverse Drug Reactions

Below are the specific medications, classes of medications, and patient characteristics that Dr. Mark H. Beers and Dr. Jerry Gurwitz have identified as placing the elderly at high risk for potential adverse drug reactions. You will want to identify each one that applies to your loved one and keep this record in your three-ring binder.

(Check all that apply)

Specific Medications:

- Digoxin
- Coumadin, warfarin
- Lithium
- Chlopropamide

Class of Medication:

- Anticonvulsants
- Antipsychotics
- Benzodiazepine long-acting (half-life > 24 hours)
- Benzodiazepine intermediate-acting (half-life 10-24 hours)
- Narcotic analgesics
- Anticholinergics

Patient Characteristics:

- Number of active chronic medical diagnoses (> 6)
- Number of doses of medication per day (> 12)
- Nine or more medications
- Prior adverse drug reaction
- Low body weight or body mass index (< 22 kg/m²)
- Advanced age (> 85)
- Decreased renal function (< 50 ml/min)