



## Too Many Doctors!

Xiao Ju looks after her health, but one day she notices a lot of bruises on her body. She's frightened. She asks the pharmacist and her doctor for advice.

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*get to know your medicines*



National Prescribing Service Limited

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In January, Xiao Ju went to visit her daughter in Dubbo. She felt sick so she went to the doctor. The doctor wrote her a prescription for medicine. He asked her to keep taking the medicine, even when she started feeling better. After a while, the medicine made her feel a lot better.

In February, Xiao Ju went back to work. One day at work, she hurt her back. Her boss took her to a doctor near her work and he suggested a cream to rub on her back. She also bought some anti-inflammatory tablets for her sore back from the supermarket.

Xiao Ju also talked to her Chinese herbalist. She has felt tired since she hurt her back. She likes to go to the herbalist because she can speak Cantonese and she can understand everything the herbalist says. The herbalist gave her some herbal medicine.

In March, Xiao Ju saw her local doctor because she had diarrhoea and a headache. He said she did not need a medicine to stop the diarrhoea but suggested some aspirin for her headache.

She started to take the tablets. Then she noticed something. She bumped her arm on the door and she got a bad bruise. She found a lot of bruises on her body. She was frightened. Was the medicine causing the bruises?



She went back to the pharmacist about the bruises. The pharmacist was surprised. She asked Xiao Ju a lot of questions.

She said, "I think your medicines are not mixing well together. Maybe all the medicines together are making you bruise."

She gave Xiao Ju a little booklet. The booklet had a page called Medicines List.

She said, "Write down all the medicines you take on this list and take it to your doctor. Then talk to your doctor about it."

Doctor: Good morning, Xiao Ju. Thank you for writing a list of your medicines. Let's have a look at it. Uh, this first one is the medicine I suggested. Are you taking the medicine how I asked you to?



Xiao Ju: Yes, I am. And I take this prescription too from the doctor in Dubbo. Two tablets in the evening before food.

Doctor: Uh-huh. And you take paracetamol every day. What's that for?

Xiao Ju: I hurt my back at work and I get headaches. The paracetamol is for that.

Doctor: Mmmm. Are you taking any other medicine for your back?

Xiao Ju: I don't take any other medicine. But the doctor I went to suggested a cream. Here... I can show it to you.



Doctor: Yes, that's OK. Let's write that on the list too. Do you use it every day?

Xiao Ju: Yes, I do. I rub it on my back morning and night.

Doctor: Do you buy other medicines at the pharmacist or the supermarket?

Xiao Ju: Sometimes an antacid for my stomach.

Doctor: OK, I'll write that down too. Do you go to a naturopath or a Chinese herbalist? Do you take Chinese medicines?

Xiao Ju: Yes. Every day I take a medicine from the Chinese herbalist and another Chinese medicine when my back is bad.

Doctor: Is there anything else? Maybe a vitamin or a sleeping tablet?

Xiao Ju: Hmm, no, but when I feel tired I make tea with herbs from the garden. That's good for the blood.



Doctor: Well, you know... all of these are medicines. Medicines can be many things. Injections, tablets and syrups, creams and vitamins, prescriptions and Chinese herbs...



Doctor: When you take different medicines together, they can sometimes interact - they can affect each other and make you sick. It's not safe to use some medicines together.



Now this list shows all your medicines, when you take them, why you take them and how much you take. We must be careful to choose medicines that can work together without unwanted effects. Let's decide which medicines you keep taking and which medicines you stop taking.

Xiao Ju: How do we do that?

Doctor: Most medicines in Australia have been tested. We know their possible side effects and how they may interact with other medicines. Sometimes herbal medicines have not been tested in the same way. But if we know what you're taking, we can usually tell if they might cause problems when taken with other medicines.



So, we will look at the list now. And we will look at it together every six months. We can make changes to help you stay well. And if you want to make some changes yourself, please talk to me first. OK?

Xiao Ju: OK.