

# Drug Safety: Reading Labels and Patient Information

## Why Read Labels and Information Sheets?

Your prescription drug comes in a bottle or a box with a label. You also receive written information about the drug from your pharmacy. Both the label and the information sheet tell you important safety information.



## How to Read a Drug Label

Pharmacy labels have a lot of information. Here are the things to look for on a drug label. Each pharmacy may put the information in a different place. To learn more, visit our free website, [www.ConsumerReportsHealth.org/BestBuyDrugs](http://www.ConsumerReportsHealth.org/BestBuyDrugs).

**Pharmacy name and address** — CENTRAL PHARMACY  
 45 Main St, Anytown, US 12345

**Prescription number** — Rx# 231-479-161

**Who the prescription is for** — SMITH, JANE

**Directions for taking the drug** — TAKE ONE TABLET ORALLY DAILY OR EVERY SIX TO EIGHT HOURS AS NEEDED FOR SYMPTOMS.

**Quantity in the container** — 24

**Brand name of the drug** — FAZACLO

**Refills left** — NO REFILLS

**Generic name of the drug** — CLOZAPINE

**Dose, or strength, of the drug** — TAB 10-500MG

**Expiration date of the drug** — USE BEFORE 06/24/12

**Safety reminders** — DO NOT TAKE THIS DRUG IF YOU BECOME PREGNANT; DO NOT DRINK ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES WHEN TAKING THIS MEDICATION; MAY CAUSE DROWSINESS OR DIZZINESS

**Doctor** who wrote the prescription — Dr. Jones, John C

**Date** the prescription was filled — DATE 06/24/10

**Phone number** of the pharmacy — (800) 555-5555

# Drug Safety: Reading Labels and Patient Information

## How to Read a Patient Information Sheet

Your pharmacy gives you printed safety information with each prescription. Here are the things to look for on a patient information sheet:

### Warning or Cautions

- What you need to tell your doctor before you take the drug.
- The main risks of taking the drug.

### Uses

- The health problems that the drug treats.
- How the drug works.

### How to Use

- How to take the drug.
- How often to take it.
- Whether or not to chew it or take it with food.

Keep the drug information sheets that come with your prescriptions. They have important safety information.

## Side Effects

- The most common side effects.
- When to tell your doctor about a side effect.
- Side effects that are rare but serious and what you should do if you have one.

## Precautions/Before Using this Medicine

- The things you need to tell your doctor before you start the drug, like any other drugs and supplements you take and if you are pregnant or allergic to any drugs.

## Drug Interactions

- The other drugs that you should avoid while you are taking this drug. These other drugs can make the new drug less effective or increase the side effects. This may include some over-the-counter drugs and supplements, too.

## Overdose

- The phone number to call if you think you took too much of the drug.

## Notes/Additional Information

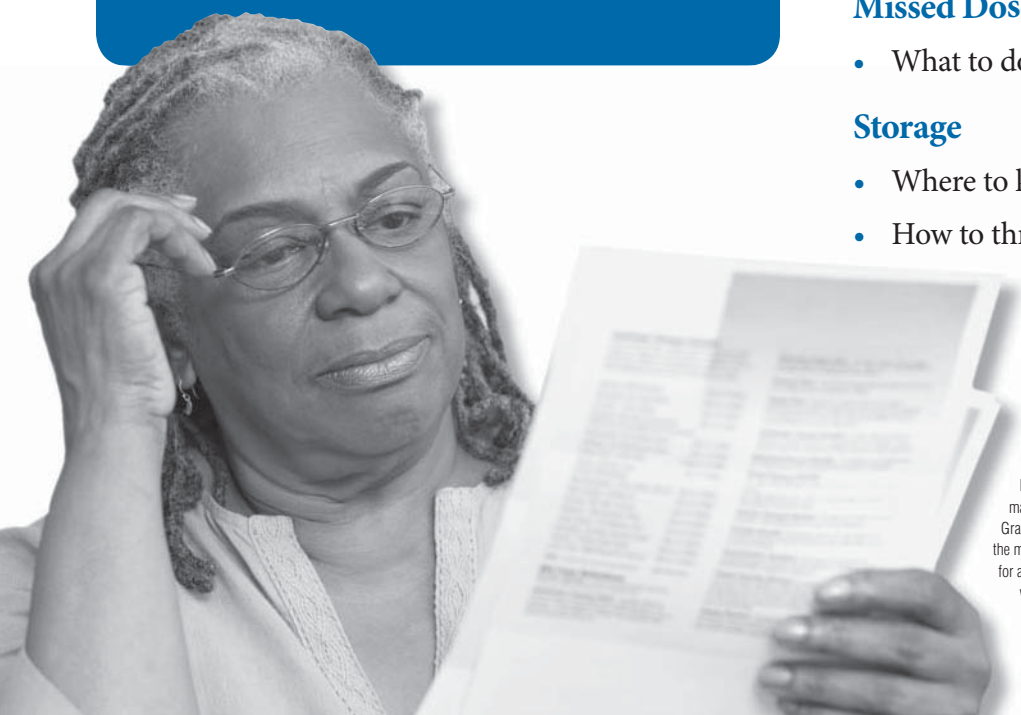
- Other information about taking this drug.

## Missed Dose

- What to do if you forget to take the drug.

## Storage

- Where to keep the drug.
- How to throw away the drug safely.



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