

# Polypharmacy

Polypharmacy is taking multiple medications at the same time for one or many conditions.



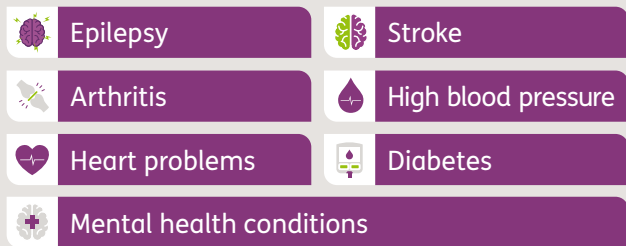
## What medications does polypharmacy include?

It includes prescription medicines, over-the-counter medicines and complementary medicines.



## Who does polypharmacy affect?

Polypharmacy is more common among people with disability, as they are more likely to have multiple health conditions.



## What is psychotropic polypharmacy?

Psychotropic polypharmacy is taking two or more medications at the same time which affect brain function.



## What are the risks associated with polypharmacy?

People on multiple medications have an increased chance of experiencing a range of health concerns.

- Medication-related side effects
- Increased hospitalisations
- Diabetes
- Stroke
- Falls
- Sedation
- Overall poorer health outcomes



## What is the treatment?

Despite the risks, polypharmacy may be the most appropriate treatment, particularly for people with multiple conditions. However, it needs to be carefully monitored and reviewed regularly.

NDIS support workers can assist participants with arranging appointments and keeping up-to-date lists of all medications and review dates.

- review medications with a doctor every 3-6 months by appointment
- review medications with a pharmacist every 2 years (or earlier) through the Home Medicines Review program.



### Find out more

For full details on this practice alert and the obligations for NDIS support workers, and access to other training and resources, please visit [ndiscommission.gov.au/workerresources](https://www.ndis.com.au/workerresources)



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