



Eagle file photos

**Len's Drug Pharmacy Technician Rori Leighton, left, and Pharmacy Manager Tilli Bjornberg work in the John Day pharmacy.**



**Pharmacists can explain prescriptions at Len's Drug in John Day.**



**Len's Drug Pharmacy Manager Tilli Bjornberg has a Doctor of Pharmacy degree and a Masters of Business Administration degree in pharmacy management.**

# Talking to the pharmacist ... ... not just a good idea

By Greg Armstrong  
For the Blue Mountain Eagle

**I**n our fast-paced digital world, the opportunity for meaningful face-to-face interaction still does exist and perhaps at an unlikely place: the pharmacy.

While they may seem busy, a few extra moments talking to a pharmacist can be worthwhile.

Most pharmacists choose their careers because they like people and they like to help people become healthier. Many pharmacists participate in special programs that help their customers become the best they can be by offering weight-loss programs, smoking cessation, cardiac health, diabetes care or lung care.

You may have heard these words at the pharmacy counter, "The pharmacist is going to come down and visit with you about your prescription." Great, you think, more waiting, but your pharmacist wants to ensure that you understand at least a few details about your medication. Mostly, the pharmacist will concentrate on new medication or changes to your current medication. That is why you should look carefully at your medication before you leave the pharmacy. Read the instructions to ensure you understand and no changes have occurred, even on refills. Check the medication for the same size, color and shape that you are used to getting. Pharmacies would love to never change the manufacturer of your medications — it would solve many of their problems — but they are at the mercy of drug wholesalers and manufacturers to maintain their inventory to have adequate supplies of medication to serve the population of customers. If anything does not look right, ask!

The pharmacist is always willing to talk. Even if busy, they are willing.

Especially when it comes to children's medications, be sure your questions are answered. Common question areas include storage, dosage, side effects, special precautions, conflicts with food or other medicines or missed doses.

Not only are these good questions, but it is also important that your children understand their medication and how to use it.

A study from the UK states, "Although children take responsibility for taking their medication at different ages, involving parents, and where possible children, in decision making is key to medicine optimization."

At Len's Drug, the pharmacists love to speak directly to the child, if possible, during a medication consultation. The child will take much more ownership of their medication if the information is given directly to them.

And always feel free to call the pharmacist if you have questions once you're home. The pharmacist really does want to make sure you have the information you need, both written and verbal.

Pharmacists also offer these general tips about your medication:

- Do not keep medicine in the medicine cabinet! The medicine cabinet in a steamy, moist bathroom is not the best place to keep any medicine — prescription or otherwise. The room's moisture can make medicines less potent. It's best to keep medicines in a hall closet or on a high shelf in the kitchen.

- Remember to keep prescription and non-prescription medicines out of the reach of children.

- Never repackage medicines. Keep them in their original childproof containers so you'll have the expiration date and instruc-

tions on hand.

- Toss out medicines when they have expired (usually one year for pills or sooner for liquids — check the prescription label for the expiration date) or the doctor has told you that your child should stop taking them.

- Most liquid medicines are now flavored, but some might taste bad to a young child. Some can be mixed with other flavors or foods to encourage kids to take the entire dose. Check with your pharmacist to see what would work best with which drug.

- When giving liquid medicine, use a medicine syringe or spoon (not a household spoon) to make sure your child gets the exact amount prescribed. Len's Drug has complimentary dosage spoons and droppers available.

- If your child takes the wrong dosage, call the pharmacist or doctor right away and follow the instructions.

- If medicines need to be refrigerated, keep them cool while traveling. Freezer packs in coolers work fine. If you can, take the entire medicine bottle. That way, you won't forget the prescription dosage and, if something happens to the medicine, you can get a refill.

The pharmacist staff at Len's Drug strives to be available for your every need.

Call the pharmacy anytime with questions at 541-575-0629.

*Greg Armstrong is a registered pharmacist at Len's Drug in John Day with a Bachelor of Pharmacy degree. The pharmacy staff includes Tilli Bjornberg, who has a Doctor of Pharmacy degree and a Masters of Business Administration degree in pharmacy management, and Carl Amstad, Tracie Unterwegner and Wendy Springer, who have Bachelor of Pharmacy degrees.*