



Medication Safety Issues

- **Changes Take Time:** If your doctor wants to adjust anything, it can take weeks for changes to be made to an MDS.
- **Limited Choice:** It can be hard to stop any medicines because you may not easily see which ones are in the tray.
- **Child Safety:** Some MDS trays are not safe for children, which can be a risk if they are within reach.
- **Spills:** If the medicines spill, you might accidentally take the wrong ones.
- **Difficult to Follow Instructions:** If your doctor says to stop a medication, it can be hard to know which one it is.
- **Missing Information:** MDS trays might not include all the instructions you need, which can lead to side effects or the medicine not working well.
- **Confusion with Mixed Medications:** It can be confusing if some medicines are in the MDS and others are not, leading to mistakes.
- **Delay in Taking Medicines:** If caregivers are helping, it might take longer to find and give the right medicines.

Environmental Concerns:

- **Plastic Waste:** The trays can lead to plastic waste.
- **Higher Carbon Footprint:** MDS systems can harm the environment.
- **Wasted Medicines:** Changes in medications or unclear labelling can cause waste, especially during hospital stays

Lack of Information:

- **Understanding the Risks:** It isn't known how storing medicines outside their original packaging can affect their safety and effectiveness.
- **Limited Evidence:** There is little proof that using MDS helps people take their medicines more consistently.

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Monitored Dosage System Alternatives

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What is a Monitored Dosage System (MDS)?

A Monitored Dosage System (MDS) helps organise medications. It involves taking tablets and capsules out of their original packages and putting them into a tray. This tray has sections for each day of the week and for different times of day. Sometimes, people call an MDS a "tray" or "nomad." MDS are not routinely supplied through NHS services, but your pharmacy may provide one at a cost. Historically, Monitored Dosage Systems have been used for convenience; however, there are often more suitable options available for managing your medications. You may have received this leaflet following a recommendation for an alternative aid from a healthcare professional.

Please note that MDS are not routinely provided through NHS services. You may request one from your pharmacy, but you may incur a fee.

Other options



Difficulty Opening Containers

Larger Containers
Easy-Open Tops
Pill Press/Popper



Memory Aids:

Reminder Charts
Alarms
Simplifying Medications



Visual Impairment Solutions:

Color-Coded Dots
Large Print or Braille Labels



Reminder Apps:

Download reminder apps from the Apple App Store or Google Play Store

or ask your Community Pharmacy for advice. Please note that some of these options may incur a charge.



Our message

The purpose of this leaflet is to raise awareness of MDS alternatives. We've seen an increased use of MDS over the years, despite national guidance recommending that medicines remain in their original packaging.

We don't want to discourage their use, as their provision is sometimes appropriate, but MDS can disempower or reduce autonomy for people.