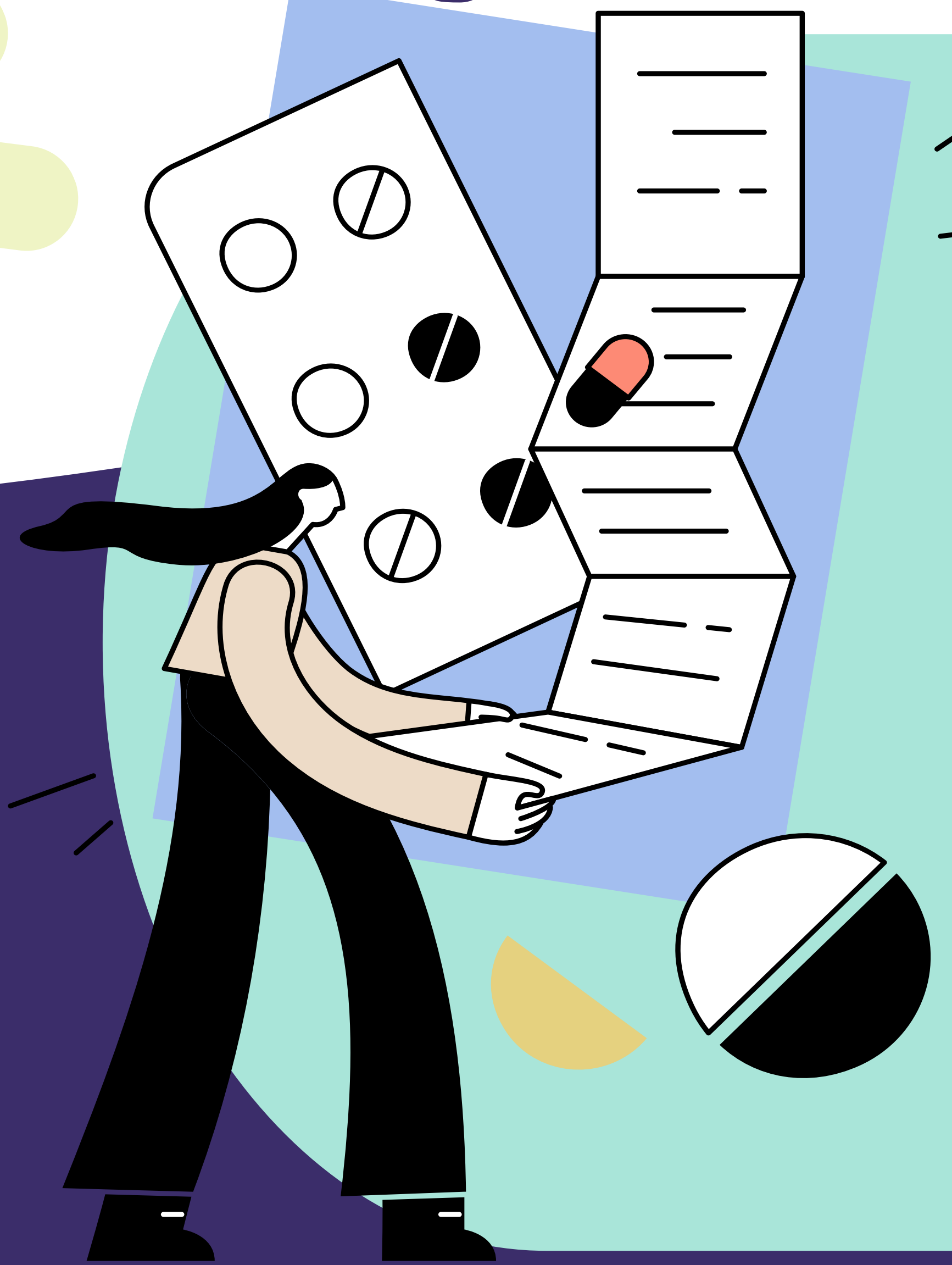


# Medication Literacy: Let's Learn

## What is medication literacy?

Medication literacy is the ability to understand, communicate and process information related to medications. It plays a key role in taking medication safely and effectively.



## Why is this important?

There are more than 100,000 reports of medication errors in the U.S. each year.

Over 50% of U.S. medical errors involve medication.

Approximately 25% of all medication errors are attributed to drug name confusion.



## How can we reduce medication errors?

Learn to identify the drug's generic name to avoid confusion over brand names – a leading cause of medication errors.

## Why is the generic name important?

- A drug can have more than one brand name, but it has only one generic name.
- The generic name is always on a medication label. It is usually listed as the "Active ingredient" and will appear in smaller print near the brand name.
- Identifying the generic name can help prevent accidentally taking too much of the same drug. Mistakes can be deadly.

## Did you know that drugs have three different types of names?

- **Chemical name:** A scientific name based on the drug's chemical makeup. It is too long and complex to be included on a medication label.
- **Generic name:** An often tongue-twisting term that describes the active chemical in the drug. Each drug has only one generic name! It remains the same regardless of the drug manufacturer.
- **Brand name:** A catchy and easy-to-remember name that is often related to the medication's intended use. The brand name is given by the drug manufacturer, so there may be several different brand names for the same drug.

Never be afraid to **ASK QUESTIONS!**  
Call your doctor.  
Talk with your pharmacist.



## Did you know?

- Motrin and Advil are different brand names for the same generic drug, ibuprofen.
- Benadryl and Zzzquil are different brand names for the same generic drug, diphenhydramine.
- The drug combination in Excedrin Migraine and Excedrin Extra Strength are identical.