



Strategies to Improve Medical Record Documentation of Allergies & Adverse Reactions

Use allergy stickers if using paper records

- Use brightly-colored stickers for high visibility
- Place them so they're not obscured by other objects or documents
- Include an "NKA" (No Known Allergies) option on the stickers as the best way to increase documentation of the absence of allergies and adverse reaction
- Stickers must be readily available in each exam room to be widely used

Keep information up-to-date

- Allergy information is only useful if entries are dated and updated regularly
- Office staff can get updated information during patient check-in
- Ask **"Is there any drug that we shouldn't give you for *any* reason?"**
- This way, office staff can elicit information in a way that eliminates confusion about whether a reaction is an allergy or a side effect
- **Both** should be documented because they're important to safe patient care

Educate your patients/our members

- Patients play an important role in facilitating the safe delivery of their own care
- Make sure they tell you about **all** the medicines they are taking and if they experience any reactions or side effects to any of them
- Ask them to tell you about **all** prescription and over-the-counter drugs and dietary supplements
- Ask your patients to **repeat back to you** how, when and how long they should take their medicines and what side effects to look for
- Encourage patients to write things down
- Use terms patients can understand and remember easily