

*The Mute Swan is the elegant bird of ballets and fairy tales but can be seen on the St. Lawrence.*

# AGING WELL

A NEWSLETTER FROM



PHARMACIE  
MEDICAL ARTS  
PHARMACY

*Where aging well means everything*



*These cheery perennials start blooming in June.*

## Is there a “best time” to take your medication?

Almost all living things - including plants - have what’s known as a **circadian rhythm**.

Circadian is a Latin word that means “about a day.”

### But what is the circadian rhythm?

You could think of it as the natural rhythm of how the body functions over a 24-hour period. Remember, the human body is always at work. It produces many hormones (including insulin) controls body temperature and performs hundreds of other functions from breathing to blood circulation.

Yet, this natural built-in rhythm also takes cues from the external

environment. Sunlight, for instance, is one of the most powerful environmental cues because it affects the sleep/wake cycle.

### So what does all this have to do with medication?

In general, the body performs somewhat differently during periods of sleep and periods of wake. This means there are implications for how certain medications work “best” over a 24-hour period, and is known as the science of **chronobiology**.

**Call to book  
a MedsCheck**



## Here's an example.

Many people suffer from heartburn (or gastric reflux) especially during the night. This is because the stomach is at its busiest circadian rhythm (producing digestive substances and acid) between the hours of 10 p.m. and 2 a.m. In fact, the stomach is two to three times busier during this period.

So, if you've been prescribed a medication to control gastric reflux, a Medical Arts Pharmacist might suggest you take your medication on an empty stomach before your evening meal. This way, there's time for the drug to help control the acid production after you've eaten, and it will see you through that critical time when the stomach is naturally busier.

Please remember this is only one example. And depending on your medication, dose and symptoms, the pharmacist might offer a different strategy.

## Here's a second example.

Many people are treated with statin drugs for high LDL cholesterol. And similarly, cholesterol production in the liver is highest after midnight. So taking a statin medication during the evening or at bedtime could be a useful strategy. However, you should consult your Medical Arts pharmacist about the kind of cholesterol drug you're taking. They're not all the same.

There are many examples of drugs, the best time to take them and whether they should or shouldn't be taken with food.

Booking a **MedsCheck** appointment with the pharmacist is a perfect opportunity to get to know your medication better.

But remember, you can ask questions any day or any time you need help!



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