Medication Consultation Pointers

Preparing for medication teaching

Work with the patient to find a preferred time to meet with them. Be sure to include other people important to managing their medications. You may be meeting with them to introduce or evaluate a new mediation or closer to the time they are being discharged. Try to avoid interrupting other interprofessional team members from scheduled meeting times (example- physical therapy). Arrange any communication aides (translators, equipment for hearing impairments) that would be beneficial. Type up clear instructions and have your pharmacist review them. Print out supplemental materials you want to use. Acquire technology tools if they will be used.

Doing the teaching

Be sure to consider health literacy in your word choices. Talk in terms people can understand (example "water pill" vs. "diuretic,"). When educating and counseling patients about their medication, the following items should be discussed.

1. Name [trademark, generic, common synonym or other descriptive name(s)];
2. Intended use and expected action;
3. Duration of therapy;
4. Route, dosage form, dosage and administration schedule;
5. Special directions for preparation;
6. Special directions for administration;
7. Precautions to be observed during administration;
8. Common side effects that may be encountered, including their avoidance and action required if they occur;
9. Techniques for self-monitoring of drug therapy;
10. Proper storage;
11. Potential drug-drug or drug-food interactions or other therapeutic contraindications;
12. Prescription refill information; at time of refill establish efficacy/toxicity status of therapy;
13. Action to be taken in the event of a missed dose; and
14. Any other information peculiar to the specific patient or drug.
15. Specify times that the patient should take his medication--tailor to the patient's regular eating, work and sleeping schedule.

Follow up
The teaching will be documented as indicated by your rotation site.