



Keeping Your Children Medicine-Safe

As children get older, they often start to take on more responsibility—at home, at school, and even with their health. That is why it's so important for families to help children learn how to make safe choices.

Over-the-counter (OTC) medicines can be purchased from

a store without a doctor's prescription, but they still need to be treated with the same amount of care! It is important to read and follow the *Drug Facts* label every time.

Watch the "Top 5 Tips for Keeping Your Kids Safe" video at scholastic.com/otc-tips-video.

Medicine Action Plan

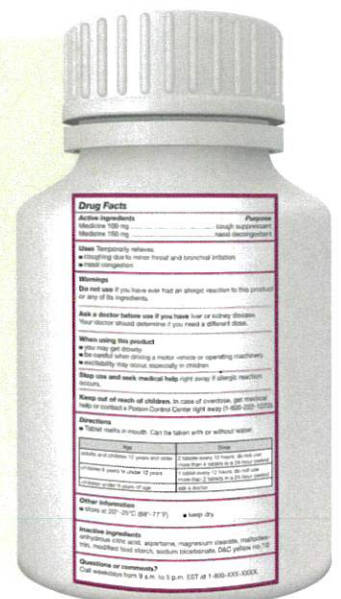
Create a medicine action plan to help keep everyone safe and healthy! Have your child check off each item as you complete it together.

- Which adults should your child talk to if he or she is sick and may need medicine? Provide options if a primary caregiver is unavailable.
- Where will medicines be stored in your home? Remember that they should be up, away, and out of sight!
- How will you make sure that each medicine and the dosing device it comes with are kept together?
- How will your family make sure that the child safety caps are locked on all medicines?
- How will you make sure that visitors keep all of their medicines out of children's reach and sight?
- Program the Poison Help number into your phone: 1-800-222-1222. Bookmark the Interactive Poison Help Website: poisonhelp.org.

Get to Know Your Medicine Label

Work as a family to learn more about the children's OTC medicines that you have in your home. Answer these questions together:

- ▶ What are the active ingredients?
- ▶ Are any side effects listed (under "Warnings")?
- ▶ Where is the poison control number on this label?
- ▶ What is the correct dose for your child to take if he or she is sick?
- ▶ How frequently should your child take the medicine if he or she is sick?
- ▶ Is the dose or frequency different for a younger sibling?
- ▶ What type of medicine dosing device came with the medicine? (Make sure it is stored with the medicine!)



Get free, confidential answers to your medicine questions by calling

5 SAFETY TIPS

ABOUT OTC MEDICINE SAFETY



1. Read and follow the *Drug Facts* label each time.

This is the label on all over-the-counter (OTC) drugs that tells you the name(s) of active ingredients, warnings you should consider when using the medicine, and the correct dose and schedule for taking the medicine.

2. Measure carefully.

It is important to only use the dosing device that comes with the medicine because it provides an exact measurement. To get the right dose, read and follow the directions on the *Drug Facts* label. Medicines can cause harm when they are not used as labeled.

3. Ask a pharmacist, nurse, or doctor.

Pharmacists, nurses, and doctors, such as those who answer the phone at your local poison center, are resources that you can rely on to answer questions about medicines, dosage, medicine disposal, and overall responsible use.

4. Store all medicines “up and away.”

Every year nearly 500,000 parents or caregivers call poison control centers because a child got into a medicine or was given the wrong dose. Store all medicines (including OTCs) out of the reach and sight of children immediately after each use.

5. Know the active ingredients.

Know the active ingredients in your medicines. Take only one medicine at a time that contains the same active ingredient. Taking more than one medicine with the same active ingredient could result in an overdose and cause harm.



Save the Poison Help number in your phone: **1-800-222-1222.**

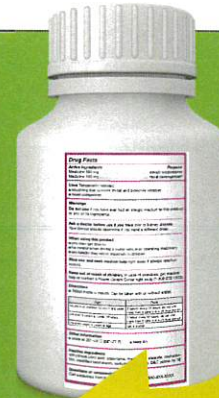
Your local poison control center answers calls 24 hours a day, seven days a week.



OVER-THE-COUNTER MEDICINE SAFETY

WHAT'S ON THE LABEL?

Drug Facts help you understand the medicines that you take and how to take them safely. All medicines should be taken under the direct supervision of a parent or trusted adult.



Drug Facts

Active ingredients	Purpose
Medicine 100 mg	cough suppressant
Medicine 150 mg	nasal decongestant

Uses Temporarily relieves:

- coughing due to minor throat and bronchial irritation
- nasal congestion

Warnings

Do not use if you have ever had an allergic reaction to this product or any of its ingredients.

Ask a doctor before use if you have liver or kidney disease. Your doctor should determine if you need a different dose.

When using this product

- you may get drowsy
- be careful when driving a motor vehicle or operating machinery
- excitability may occur, especially in children

Stop use and seek medical help right away if allergic reaction occurs.

Keep out of reach of children. In case of overdose, get medical help or contact a Poison Control Center right away (1-800-222-1222).

Directions

- Tablet melts in mouth. Can be taken with or without water.

Age	Dose
adults and children 12 years and older	2 tablets every 12 hours; do not use more than 4 tablets in a 24-hour period
children 6 years to under 12 years	1 tablet every 12 hours; do not use more than 2 tablets in a 24-hour period
children under 6 years of age	ask a doctor

Other information

- store at 20°–25°C (68°–77°F) ■ keep dry

Inactive ingredients

anhydrous citric acid, aspartame, magnesium stearate, maltodextrin, modified food starch, sodium bicarbonate, D&C yellow no. 10

Questions or comments?

Call weekdays from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. EST at 1-800-XXX-XXXX.

The **Uses** section of the label tells you the symptoms the medicine treats.

Look in the **Warnings** section to learn about what other medicines you should not take with this medicine, the side effects this medicine can cause, when to ask a doctor before taking this medicine, and other important safety information such as when to stop taking the medicine and talk to a doctor.

The **Directions** section of the label tells you the amount of medicine (dose) you can take, how often you can take the medicine, and how much you can take in one day.

Some labels also have a **Questions or comments?** section that gives you the phone number of the company if you have questions or comments on the specific medicine.

The **Active ingredients** section of the label tells you the names of the active ingredients in the medicine and what jobs they do (e.g., relieve pain, reduce fever, or suppress cough). Some medicines may have more than one active ingredient.

In the **Other information** section of the label you'll find other things you need to know, such as how to store the medicine.

You'll find a list of any preservatives, food coloring, flavoring, or other ingredients not intended to treat your symptoms in the **Inactive ingredients** section on the **Drug Facts** label. These can be important if you or someone in your family has an allergy.

This is not an actual Drug Facts label.

OTC MEDICINE FACTS

1. Over-the-counter (OTC) medicines need to be treated with the same care and caution as prescription (Rx) drugs.
2. Ask your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist if you have questions about an OTC medicine.
3. Always use the dosing device that comes with your OTC medicine.
4. Take only one medicine at a time that contains the same kind of active ingredient.
5. All medicines, including OTC medicines, should be put up, away, and out of sight after every use.



ASK FOR HELP

Poison control centers are open 24 hours a day, every day of the year. Calls are fast, free, and confidential.

Save the Poison Help number in your phone:

1-800-222-1222



Medicine Storage and Disposal, Safe Use, and Misuse

Using the correct dose of medicine is a science—too little won't be effective, and too much could be harmful. It's also important to make sure that medicines are stored up, away, and out of sight, as well as disposed of properly (see bit.ly/fda-disposal).

Play the **Hidden Home Hazards** game as a family to learn about safe storage and download an extended version of this guide at scholastic.com/otc-med-safety/families.

Medicine Safety Hunt

How safe is each room in your home? Work together as a family to make sure that all types of health-related items are up and away in a safe location. Look for all of the following:

- ▶ Liquid medicines
- ▶ Pills
- ▶ Medicated creams
- ▶ Cough drops
- ▶ Eye drops
- ▶ Vitamins
- ▶ Supplements
- ▶ Prescription medicines
- ▶ Other healthcare products or potentially dangerous products, such as detergent pods

1. Are all medicines up, away, and out of sight?
2. Is the medicine dosing device stored with the medicine?
3. When disposing of a medicine, do you follow the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's guidelines?
4. Is any medicine past its expiration date?

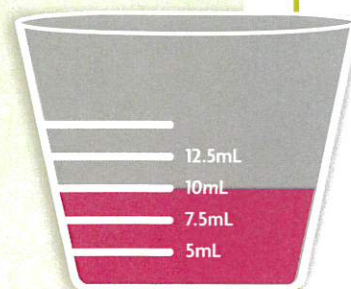
What Should You Do?

As a family, read each of the following scenarios about OTC medicines. Is this situation safe? Is this misuse? How should the characters handle the situation?

- ▶ Nikita has a headache. Last time she had a headache, her dad gave her some ibuprofen. He isn't home from work yet, so Nikita goes to the medicine cabinet and takes a couple of the pills without talking to her dad.
- ▶ Ruben is taking a dose of cough syrup under his mom's supervision. He forgot the dosing device in the cabinet, so he

grabs a spoon from the kitchen drawer to measure his dose of medicine.

- ▶ Every day, Angelica takes a once-a-day allergy medicine. Her mom always reminds her at breakfast. Today, though, it doesn't seem to be working. At lunchtime, Angelica takes another dose of the medicine so she will feel better faster.



Dosage Cup

the Poison Help number, 1-800-222-1222, or visit poisonhelp.org.



Our OTC Medicine Safety Checklist

- Read and follow the *Drug Facts* label every time.
- Measure carefully. Keep the medicine and the dosing device it comes with together. Never use household spoons to measure medicine.
- Check that all medicines, vitamins, and supplements are stored up, away, and out of sight of young children. Keep prescription medicines locked away.
- Ensure that the child safety caps are locked on all medicines.
- Remind visitors to keep luggage, purses, or anything else that might have medicines in it out of children's reach and sight.
- Medicines should only be taken with the supervision of an adult or trusted guardian. Communicate with other caregivers to prevent double-dosing errors.
- Make sure your children know that using OTC and prescription medicines incorrectly can cause harm.
- Program the Poison Help number into your phone: **1-800-222-1222**.
- Bookmark the Interactive Poison Help Website: **poisonhelp.org**.

Emergency Contacts

Post these numbers in a prominent place in your home. Remember to save them into your cell phone in case of emergency.

Family Doctor Name: _____

Phone Number: _____

Pharmacy Name: _____

Phone Number: _____



Poison Help Number: **1-800-222-1222**

Open 24 hours a day *every day of the year*. Calls are fast, free, and confidential.

Interactive Poison Help Website: **poisonhelp.org**

All of these resources and more are available for FREE:
scholastic.com/OTCmedsafety/families