

SAFETY MATTERS Pediatric Medication Safety

Giving the Right Medicine to Your Child

- Give only medicines made for children
- Children are not 'small' adults
- Their bodies are less developed
- Adult medicines given to child could:
 - Affect child differently
 - Cause life-threatening side effects

Questions to Ask Your Healthcare Provider

- What is this medicine for?
- How much do I give and how often?
- What are the possible side effects?
- What are the signs of allergic reaction?
- How do I know if the medicine is working?
- When will I know if the medicine is working?
- When do I stop giving the medicine?
- Can I give with their other medicines, vitamins, supplements, or herbs?

General Tips for Safe Use of Medicines

- DO
 - Use only medicines made for children
 - Store medicine out of child's reach in original bottle
 - Carefully read medicine label
 - Know child's weight; doses are often weight-based
 - Know the names of all medicines your child takes
 - Give updated list of child's medicines, vitamins, minerals, supplements, herbs, and alternative health treatments to healthcare provider at each visit
- DON'T
 - Stop medicines earlier than instructed
 - Give child other people's medicines
 - Call medicines 'candy'
 - Use longer or give higher dose unless told to by healthcare provider

Reading Labels is Important

- Labels tell details such as:
 - Name of medicine
 - How often to take
 - How much to take
 - How long to take
 - When to take
 - How to store



Over-the-counter Medicines Not to Give Your Child Unless Advised by Healthcare Provider

- Aspirin, even baby aspirin
- Cough medicines
- Cold medicines for children under 4 to 6 years
- Medicines for diarrhea or constipation
- Medicines for nausea
- Medicines to make child fall asleep
- Ibuprofen for children under 6 months
- Expectorants (mucous-thinner)
- Oral or nose spray decongestants
- Steroid creams in the diaper area and on the face
- Herbal supplements
- Antibiotic creams on small cuts and scrapes
- Teething medicines

Safe Use of Liquid Acetaminophen

- Many different brands of acetaminophen
- Important to give right dose for child's weight
- **CONCENTRATIONS OF ACETAMINOPHEN NOW CHANGED**
 - Old and new concentrations may still be in stores and homes including:
 - 160 mg/5 mL (less strong)
 - 80 mg/0.8 mL or 80 mg/1 mL (stronger)
- Check Active Ingredient section on drug label to:
 - Learn strength
 - Right dose
 - Avoid multi-dosing
- Use **ONLY** dosing device that comes with the medicine
- If child is under 2 years, be sure to ask healthcare provider about right dose
- If fever lasts longer than 72 hours or does not come down with right dose, call healthcare provider
- Don't give more than 5 doses in 24 hours

Side Effects

- Unwanted effects may occur with medicines
- Read information that comes with medicine package to learn of possible side effects
- Ask healthcare provider or pharmacist if you have any questions about possible side effects



This flipchart is supported by an educational grant from McNeil Consumer Healthcare.

