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# MEDICINE SAFETY FOR FAMILIES

Modeled after the FDA's **Medicines in My Home** program

In class, we've started a new unit called *OTC Literacy*. As part of our health education studies, this unit teaches students about over-the-counter medicine safety.

*Did you know that there may be over-the-counter medicine dangers in your home that could harm your children?*

Open this guide to learn why it is important to inspect your home for OTC medicine hazards and for easy-to-use tips to make your home safer for your entire family.

**Download more FREE resources at**  
[www.scholastic.com/OTCliteracy/parents](http://www.scholastic.com/OTCliteracy/parents).

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# 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 your local poison center at 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
- see end panel for lot number and expiration date

### 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 1-800-945-9832.

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, side effects the medicine can cause, when you should ask a doctor before taking the medicine, and other important safety information like 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 medicines also have a **Questions or Comments** section of the label 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. Never take multiple medicines with the same active ingredient unless directed by a health-care professional.
5. OTC medicines should be put up and away, and out of sight, after every use.



## KNOW WHO TO ASK

Poison centers are open 24 hours a day, every day of the year. Calls are fast, free, and confidential. Program the Poison Help Number Into Your Phone:

**1-800-222-1222**

# WHAT'S YOUR FAMILY'S MEDICINE ACTION PLAN?

As parents, we spend so much time preparing our children for the real world and teaching them the life skills they need to stay informed and safe.

Have you ever considered planning your family's medicine? It may sound odd at first to have a medicine plan, but consider this:

“Students begin to self-medicate around 11 years old; unfortunately when not equipped with the knowledge and information to make safe choices, adolescents may end up doing more harm than good.”\*

Creating an action plan is one way to know that you are using and storing medicines safely in your home. Get your whole family involved by talking about OTC medicine safety. Use these steps to guide your discussion:

1. Inspect your home for OTC medicine hazards.
2. Create an action plan.
3. Practice your plan and continue conversations all year long.



All of these resources and more are available for FREE:  
[scholastic.com/OTCliteracy/parents](http://scholastic.com/OTCliteracy/parents)

## The \_\_\_\_\_ Family's OTC Medicine Checklist

- Know the dose. Keep the medicine and the dosing device it comes with together.
- Read and follow the *Drug Facts* label every time.
- Check that all medicines, vitamins, and supplements are stored up and away and out of sight and reach.
- Ensure that the child safety caps are locked on all medicines.
- Remind visitors to keep luggage, pocketbooks, or anything else that might have medicines in it out of children's reach and sight.
- Medicines should not be taken without the supervision of an adult.
- 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.



**VIDEO ROOM:** Watch this series of informational videos created by the FDA to teach your family about using medicines safely. Click on “Video Room” here: [www.fda.gov/medsinmyhome](http://www.fda.gov/medsinmyhome).

### Ask Questions

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

#### Family Doctor:

NAME AND PHONE NUMBER

#### Pharmacy:

NAME AND PHONE NUMBER



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

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