

# Over-the-counter medicine safety

Over-the-counter medicine does not need a doctor's prescription. It may be used to treat conditions such as fever, allergies, cough and cold.

Examples: acetaminophen (Tylenol, Temptra), ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin) or diphenhydramine (Benadryl).

## Things to know before you give over-the-counter medicines to your child:

- They can be sold in different strengths.  
**EXAMPLE:** infant acetaminophen products are stronger than acetaminophen products made for older children.  
**ADVICE:** Always ask your pharmacist about the right dose (number of mL) for your child's weight.
- They may contain more than one active ingredient.  
**EXAMPLE:** cold and cough preparations may contain acetaminophen AND antihistamines AND decongestants.  
**ADVICE:** If your child is on other medications, always check with the pharmacist before starting any new over-the-counter medication.
- Some medicines may be wrong or bad for your child.  
**ADVICE:** Give your child only medicines recommended by the doctor or pharmacist.
- Giving the wrong dose of over-the-counter medicines can cause harm to your child.  
**ADVICE:** Ask your child's doctor or pharmacist exactly how MUCH of the medicine and how OFTEN you should be giving it to your child.

If you are worried that you have given too much medicine to your child, contact your provincial Poison Centre immediately.

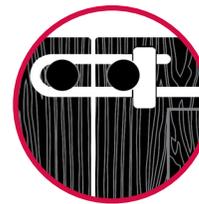
## How to safely store your medicines:

Your child can very easily get into your medicine containers at home. Keep ALL of your family's medicine (including over-the-counter medicine) locked up tight and out of sight.

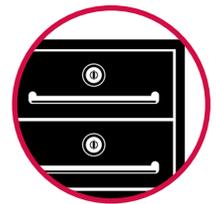
You could use:



A tackle box with a lock



Safety latch on the cupboard



A locked drawer

## Beware! Child safety lids are not enough to keep your child safe!

For further information about your over-the-counter medicines, please contact your pharmacist.

The following information was compiled by the Division of Paediatric Emergency Medicine at The Hospital Sick Children in partnership with the Ontario Poison Centre.



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