

## Useful tips when choosing and using medications:

- Be sure to look through your medicine supply cabinet at least once a year.
- Properly dispose of any medications that are past the expiration date.
- Always store medicines in a cool, dry place, or as stated on the label.
- Keep all medicines in their original containers.
- Always read the label and follow all directions.
- Know the difference between TBSP (tablespoon), and TSP (teaspoon).
- Keep a list of all your medications.
- If you have children, never refer to medicine as candy.
- **Always** talk to your doctor or pharmacist if you have questions about your medications.

*"Adverse drug events cause approximately 1.3 million emergency department visits and 350,000 hospitalizations each year." -CDC*



Image: iStockphoto.com

## Call POISON CONTROL to speak to an expert: 1-800-222-1222

Reasons to call include:

- Your toddler ate pills from grandma's purse
- You drank a cleaner, not soda
- You took the dog's medicine

**Call 911** right away if the individual collapses, has a seizure, has trouble breathing, or can't be awakened.

## Opioid awareness and proper drug disposal:

[www.onearlington.org](http://www.onearlington.org)



For more information including trainings or education programs, volunteering, or treatment resources, please contact:

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### References:

- "How to Read an Over-the-Counter Medication Label" ASHP. 2019. Web. 22 January 2018.
- "Over-The-Counter Medicines: What's Right for You?" FDA. 2018. Web. 22 January 2018.

# Safe Medication Use



**Know what's on the label:** Be sure to read the Drug Facts label each time you purchase a product.

- **Active ingredient:** This ingredient is what gives the desired effect from the medication.
- **Uses:** The reason for taking the medication; there may be more than one.
- **Warnings:** Here you will find safety information about the medication.
- **Directions:** Information about how often to take the medication, how much of it to take, and how long to use the medication.
- **Other information:** Generally this section will tell you how to store the medication.
- **Expiration date:** This is the date beyond which the manufacturer cannot recommend the safety and effectiveness of the medication.

**Drug Facts**

Active ingredient (in each tablet)	Purpose
Acetaminophen 500 mg.....	Pain reliever/fever reducer

**Uses**  
 For the temporary relief of minor aches and pains associated with  
 ■ headache ■ muscular aches ■ minor arthritis pain  
 ■ common cold ■ toothache ■ menstrual cramps

For the reduction of fever.

**Warnings**  
 Liver warning: This product contains acetaminophen. Severe liver damage may

**Drug Fac**

Stop using  
 ■ symptom  
 ■ pain or fe

If pregnant  
 Keep out of  
 medical help  
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**Direction**  
 ■ do not u:  
 Adults and

Image: mediqueproducts.com

**Avoid medication tampering:**



Image: iStockphoto.com

- Inspect the outer packaging before you buy it. When you get home, inspect the medicine inside.
- Don't buy an over the counter product if the packaging is damaged.
- Don't use any medication that looks discolored or different in any way.
- If anything looks suspicious, be suspicious! Return the product back to the store you purchased it from.

**Pregnancy and breastfeeding:**

Drugs can pass from a pregnant women to her unborn or breastfeeding baby. A safe amount of medicine for the mother may be too much for the baby. If you're pregnant or breastfeeding, always talk to your doctor before taking any prescription or over the counter medications.

**Drug interactions:**

Interactions involving certain medications can produce unwanted results or make medicines less effective.

- Avoid alcohol if you are taking antihistamines (e.g., Benadryl, Claritin, Zyrtec), cough-cold products with the ingredient dextromethorphan (e.g., Delsym, Robitussin, Mucinex DM), or drugs that treat sleeplessness.
- Consult your doctor before taking products that contain aspirin if you're taking a prescription blood thinner.
- Do not use laxatives when you have stomach pain, nausea, or vomiting.
- Avoid using a nasal decongestant (e.g., Afrin, Sudafed, Sudafed PE) if you are taking a prescription drug for high blood pressure, depression, or diabetes, unless directed by a doctor.



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