

Poison Prevention Press

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March 17-23, 2019 is Poison Prevention Week (PPW)

Take this time to help make your world poison safe:

- Program 1-800-222-1222 into your mobile phones. Text "POISON" to 797979 and save the contact card
- [Request a poison information packet](#) for your home
- [Order educational materials](#) for a group
- Use our [home safety checklist](#) to make sure your home is poison safe
- Watch and share our [educational videos](#)
- Download and print our [activity sheets](#) to make learning about poison prevention fun for kids

Go to www.mdpoison.com for more information.

Did you know that...

- Each year, the average consumer shops 26 times for OTC medicine, spending \$338 per household?
- Acetaminophen is found in more than 600 different prescription and OTC medicines?

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Safe Cough and Cold Medicine Use

Winter is upon us! Along with the cold air and snow comes runny noses and coughs. Oftentimes, we reach for over-the-counter (OTC) cold medicines without a thought. Before opening the medicine cabinet this year, let's remember a few very important points.

- Cough and cold medicines will not cure the illness, or even shorten the length of time you're sick. The medicines only help reduce the symptoms for short periods of time. You will usually recover from the common cold in 7-10 days with time, rest, and drinking fluids.
- Read the label on each product. It includes important information such as ingredients, dosage directions, warnings, and proper storage.
- Use products that treat only the symptoms you have.
- Only give the recommended dose. Taking more medicine will not help you feel better faster.
- Follow the instructions on timing between doses. Taking a medicine more often will not help you feel better faster.
- If taking more than one medicine, make sure none of the active ingredients are the same.
- Tweens and teens should check with a parent or guardian before taking a medicine.
- Always use the measuring device that comes with the medicine. Using household spoons or measuring devices from other products can lead to dosing errors. Read the markings on the measuring device carefully.
- Child-resistant caps are not "child-proof." Given time, kids will get them open. Be sure to keep all medicines locked up, away, and out of sight.
- According to the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), cough and cold medicines containing decongestant and/or antihistamine are not recommended for use in children under the age of two. There is a risk of serious and potentially life threatening side effects.
- Never use adult cold products for children. Use the medicine only if there is a dose available for your child's age and weight on the label.
- Do not refer to the medicine as candy to get a child to take it. This could confuse the child and lead to them taking the medicine on their own.
- Always store cough and cold medicines out of sight and out of reach of young children, preferably in a locked cabinet.



If a dosing error happens, or if a child eats or drinks a cold medicine, contact the Maryland Poison Center at 1-800-222-1222 right away for help. Do not wait for symptoms to develop. We are a free and confidential service here to help anytime, day or night.