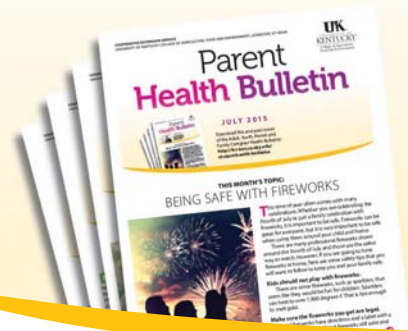


Parent Health Bulletin



APRIL 2016

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THIS MONTH'S TOPIC: CHILDREN'S MEDICINES

When your child does not feel well, it is not uncommon to offer him or her some medicine. But it is very important to offer children medicine in a safe manner. Sometimes it can be confusing or difficult to make sure you are giving your child the right amount of medication.

The first step to using medicine safely is to know when medicine is needed and when it is not. If you ever have any questions about medicines that you have for your child, you should talk to your medical provider or a pharmacist.

When a child is not feeling well, there are many times when a no-medication treatment will help ease the child's discomfort. When a child has a common cold for example, lots of fluid and rest are some of the best ways for a child to recover.



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If you ever have any questions about medicines for your child, you should talk to your medical provider or a pharmacist.

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For the stuffy nose that comes with a cold, saline drops can help loosen the nasal blockages.

If your child needs to use a medicine, it is important to know:

- The name of the medicine
- The purpose of the medicine
- How much of the medicine should be given and how often
- How long the medicine should be taken
- Whether the medicine should be taken with food or on an empty stomach
- How to store the medicine (some medicines need to be refrigerated)
- Common side effects or possible reactions
- What to do if your child misses a dose
- Potential interactions with other medications your child may be taking

Even if your child is acting like he or she is feeling better, you should still follow the directions the doctor gave you about how long the medicine should be taken.

Many of the medicines given to children depend on the child's weight. When you are calling for a prescription, it is important that your doctor and/or pharmacist know your child's current weight. When there is too little medication for the child, the medicine may not be as effective. If there is too much, then the medicine could be harmful for your child.

Some medicines are given on an as-needed basis. These include medicines that help when a child has a fever. These are usually over-the-counter type medicines. It is very important to talk to the doctor before you give your child an over-the-counter medication.

When your child has a prescription medication, it is important that you follow the directions for the length of time your child should be taking the



medication. Even if your child is acting like he or she is feeling better, you should still follow the directions the doctor gave you about how long the medicine should be taken.

Some other safety tips to remember:

- Never use leftover medication — if you have extra medication, and your child has taken the number of doses prescribed, throw it away.
- Never give adult medicine to children.
- If you have questions, make sure to ask your medical provider. If your doctor is not available, you can call a pharmacist with questions about medication.

When a child does not feel well, we want to make him or her feel better. Knowing when it is time to give a child medicine and when it is not, is an important job. If you need to give a child a medication, make sure you ask questions and know all of the details.

SOURCE:

Nemours KidsHealth. (2014) http://kidshealth.org/parent/system/medicine/medication_safety.html

Parent
Health Bulletin

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