

Medicines in My Home:

An educational program about the safe use of Over-the-Counter Medicines

This document contains information excerpted from the Medicines in My Home (MIMH) website, which is located at www.fda.gov/medsinmyhome. The other attached files include:

- The animated powerpoint slide show used to teach the classroom lesson
- The "Feel Better" principal display panel and drug facts label, which is used by students during the lesson along with the slide presentation
- The PDF file for the student booklet, which is distributed after the lesson and taken home as a resource (it is designed for printing and folding into a booklet, so the pages appear out of order)
- Home project that helps students extend the lesson beyond the classroom and into the home with family members
- "All About Me," a sheet designed to help older children share information with and start building a direct relationship with their primary clinician.

In addition to the materials you find at the website, the MIMH working group is working on the following additions:

- A consumer checklist for parents to use when shopping for children's medicines at the store
- Information on the drug approval process and the definition of an approved drug
- Information about the differences between OTC medicines and dietary supplements
- An interactive online educational program (concept developed, scripted and bid for contract).

If you are viewing these materials online, the embedded links will take you to the materials at the MIMH website. For your convenience, some of the key are included as separate files in the electronic background package.

Background

The **Medicines in My Home** program was born in Summer 2004 as a proposal to teach sixth grade students about the safe use of over-the-counter, or non-prescription, medicines. A major goal was to teach students how to find information about their medicine on the **Drug Facts** label and to give them information to share with their families.

There is only a small amount of published information about the use of nonprescription medicines by children, but the literature suggests that children start to self-medicate about the age of 11 or 12 years. At the age of 12 years, children are legally allowed to be home alone. In addition, some children take on the responsibility of babysitting at this age and may be asked to give a medicine to a younger sibling, a child they are caring for, or to themselves.

Before teenagers reach the age when they are more likely to use or take medicines without direct adult supervision, it is important for children and parents to learn and talk about the medicines they use to treat common health problems. Families should know how to use label information on their over-the-counter medicines, as this information can help them to:

- Take only the medicines they need
- Take the medicines they need correctly
- Avoid taking too much medicine accidentally by using two different products that contain the same active ingredient
- Know when to call the doctor or pharmacist for help or to answer questions.

During the 2005 - 2006 school year, **Medicines in My Home** completed an in-classroom pilot program in three Montgomery County, Maryland, middle schools. As **Medicines in My Home** grows into a web-based resource, we want to reach Americans of all ages: children, their parents, their grandparents, their teachers. We should all use our over-the-counter medicines safely, correctly, and only when we need them.

Course Description

Target Audience

Middle school - Grades 6 through 8

Estimated Duration of Lesson

40 - 45 minutes

Lesson Rationale and Goal

Over-the-counter (OTC) medicines are commonly found in the home.

Literature suggests that children begin to self-medicate at about 11 or 12 years of age.

The **Medicines in My Home** lesson emphasizes the importance of reading medicine labels (especially the **Drug Facts** label) and involving a parent or guardian in medicine decisions. The program introduces students to information about and an approach to medicine use that may help them with self-medication choices as older adolescents and young adults. The lesson uses scenarios to teach the importance of reading label warnings and not taking two medicines that contain the same active ingredients. Students who share this information with their families may, in turn,

teach their family members how to use over-the-counter medicines safely and effectively.

Key Concepts

- The **Drug Facts** label tells you what a medicine treats, how to use it, and if the medicine is right for you and your problem.
- When you use an over-the-counter medicine, **READ THE LABEL** and follow the label directions carefully and correctly.
- Medicines should be used only with permission from a parent or guardian.
- Two medicines that have the same active ingredients should not be used at the same time.
- Measure your medicines correctly with measuring tools made for medicines.
- If you or your parent has questions about your medicine, ask your doctor or pharmacist.

Learning Objectives

After completing this lesson, students will:

- Understand similarities and differences between prescription medicines and OTC medicines.
- Understand that OTC medicines and prescription medicines can be harmful if they are not taken according to the directions
- Be able to identify the active ingredients in an OTC drug product and what those active ingredients treat (the purposes and uses)
- Be able to identify the warnings sections on the **Drug Facts** label and explain why there are warnings on the **Drug Facts** label
- Be able to identify the Directions section on the **Drug Facts** label and know how to measure a dose correctly.
- Understand that a person should not use two medicines that contain the same ingredient at the same time.
- Understand how to get more information about their medicines.

Teacher's Kit

Many of these materials can be downloaded in more than one format to meet the resource needs of as many teachers and students as possible.

- **Classroom Lesson Materials**

- Medicines in My Home: Information for Students on Using Over-the-Counter Medicines Safely
This booklet is for students to take home and share with their families. It contains information that reinforces the classroom lesson and additional information about common medicines found in over-the-counter medicine products used to treat cough, cold, and allergy symptoms.

[\[HTML\]](#)

[\[Color PDF !\[\]\(ec9132f1d27c8919987d92907322654d_img.jpg\)](#), 1.3 Mb]

- Classroom Lesson on Safe OTC Medicine Use - for Student Audiences
[\[PowerPoint, 6.1 Mb\]](#) - The animated PowerPoint presentation includes slide notes to guide you through the MIMH classroom lesson.
[\[PDF, 927 Kb\]](#) - These slide note pages can be printed and used as a script while teaching the MIMH lesson in the classroom.
[\[PDF, 1 Mb\]](#) - This PDF version of the PowerPoint presentation is not animated and does not include slide notes.
- "Feel Better" **Drug Facts** label sheet [\[PowerPoint, 417 Kb\]](#)
This drug product label was created for teaching this lesson but closely resembles labels for approved medicine products. This label is used throughout the MIMH classroom lesson.
- Worksheet [\[Word, 44 Kb\]](#) [\[PDF !\[\]\(8d139a66f540002704b5c70b7fe6cc7a_img.jpg\)](#), 114 Kb]
This worksheet may be used during the lesson if you would like your students to take notes or may be reviewed after the presentation to reinforce key points.
- Student Assessment
 - Pre-test [\[Word, 46 Kb\]](#) [\[PDF !\[\]\(c209541a4bc5f45e44bd7791f9477320_img.jpg\)](#), 11 Kb]
 - Post-test [\[Word, 45 Kb\]](#) [\[PDF !\[\]\(8fd54d112e752061b5361c5bdf346185_img.jpg\)](#), 11 Kb]
 - Pre- and Post-Test Answer Key [\[Word, 53 Kb\]](#) [\[PDF !\[\]\(3525fd0bd3680f905a850c70520e38c7_img.jpg\)](#), 23 Kb]

- **Home Activities**

- Home Project [\[Word, 32 Kb\]](#) [\[PDF !\[\]\(9bfa69b6b0f097b09744337d04f22d78_img.jpg\)](#), 19 Kb]
Family homework activity that encourages students to partner with their family members to explore the OTC medicines in their home. Students apply and expand upon concepts learned in class including: safe storage location, discarding expired

products, finding correct medicine measuring tools, and identifying medicines that contain the same active ingredients.

- "All About Me" [[Word, 59 Kb](#)] [[PDF !\[\]\(86b7331e04fe40a56bcff2e9c065738b_img.jpg\) 48 Kb](#)]
Provides a place for students to record medicines used, how they feel, and questions to ask their doctor before they go for doctors' visits. We hope that using "All About Me" will encourage students to take an active role in their healthcare and their interactions with healthcare professionals.

Resources for Teachers

FDA Web Sites

- [Consumer Education/Information](#)
- [FDA and You](#), a health education newsletter for students and teachers
- [Information for Consumers and Health Educators](#)

Government Web Sites

- [Educational Resources - Topics](#), Office of Science Education, National Institutes of Health (NIH)
- [Federal Resources for Educational Excellence, Health and Safety](#), U.S. Department of Education
- [Healthy Schools, Healthy Youth](#), Division of Adolescent and School Health, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
- [MedlinePlus: Medical Encyclopedia: Home Pharmacy](#), National Institutes of Health (NIH)
- [National Institute of Drug Abuse \(NIDA\)](#), National Institutes of Health (NIH)
- [Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration \(SAMHSA\)](#), Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)

Non-government Web Sites

- [Children and Medicines](#), United States Pharmacopeia (USP)
- [Cold and Cough Medicine Abuse](#), KidsHealth, Nemours Foundation

Resources for Students

FDA Web Sites

- [Consumer Education: What You Need to Know to Use Medicine Safely](#)
- [FDA Kids' Homepage](#)
- [FDA and You](#), a health education newsletter for students and teachers
- [Health Information for Teens](#)

Government Web Sites

- [Over-the-Counter Medicines](#), National Institutes of Health (NIH)
- [Web Sites for Kids](#), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
- [MedlinePlus: Teen Health](#), National Institutes of Health (NIH)

Non-government Web Sites

- [Understanding Medications and What They Do](#), TeensHealth, Nemours Foundation
- [What Medicines Are and What They Do](#), KidsHealth, Nemours Foundation

We maintain a working relationship with the Division of Adolescent and School Health at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and are building relationships with working groups at AHRQ and other HHS agencies working on issues related to risk communications, medicines, and children.

In 2007, MIMH members worked closely with DARE America as they developed their lesson plan on Misuse and Abuse of Medicines. Their fifth grade lesson and lesson materials, which focus on correct and safe use of OTC medicines, draw heavily on the MIMH program.

Thanks to the hard work of Mandy Eisemann and Cynthia Fitzpatrick from the Division of Public Affairs in CDER's Office of Training and Communications, the MIMH program has been actively publicized in the trade press, on the FDA website, and among government and non-government groups involved with school health education.