Welcome to Medicines in My Home.

Today, we are going to talk about over-the-counter (or OTC) medicines and how to use OTC medicine labels. To use OTC medicines safely and correctly, you need to read the label and use the information on the label.

Many of the medicines that people use to treat common problems like headaches, fever, stuffy nose, allergies, cough, upset stomach, or diarrhea are over-the-counter medicines.

Today we are going to learn:
• How to read an OTC medicine label
• How to choose a medicine that is right for your problem
• How to take the right amount of medicine
• How to know when you need to stop using a medicine
• When you should not use a medicine at all.

Learning these things will help you can take good care of yourself and others. If you are a parent or caregiver for someone who is not yet fully grown, it is also important to learn these things so that you can both show and teach that young person how to use medicines safely.
As we go through this presentation today, ask yourself these questions.

(Read questions on slide)
Today we are going to talk about the safe and correct use of medicines.

So, what is a medicine?

A medicine is a drug. **Medicine** and **drug** mean the same thing.

A medicine or drug changes how your body works OR Treats or prevents a disease or symptom.

Medicines can do things as simple as making you feel better when you have a cold or as complicated as treating cancer (like chemotherapy).

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is the United States government agency that makes sure our over-the-counter and prescription medicines are safe and do what they say they do. Our focus today is on over-the-counter medicines.

Because of the way the laws are written, vitamins, herbs, and other dietary supplements are controlled by the part of FDA that regulates foods, not the part of the FDA that regulates medicines. So, the things we are going to talk about today do not apply to vitamins, herbs, and other dietary supplements.
Let’s compare.
The list of products on the left are all medicines. The list of products on the right look like they do very similar things…..but they are not medicines.

All of the products on the left change the way that your body works or treat or prevent a disease or symptom:

- Hydrocortisone cream contains a mild steroid that can treat itching and inflammation caused by an allergic reaction or skin condition like eczema. Moisturizing cream makes your skin smooth and soft.
- Fluoride toothpastes are drugs because they reduce cavities. Toothpastes without fluoride are not drugs but they do help clean your teeth.
- Dandruff shampoos are drugs because they treat dandruff and itching. Regular shampoos only make your hair cleaner.
- Antiperspirants are drugs. They stop your sweat glands from making sweat. Deodorants are not drugs. They just help you smell better.
- Sunscreens prevent sunburn from the sun’s harmful rays. Aloe vera gel just makes your sunburn feel better.
- Treatments for lice kill the lice on your hair and body. Insect repellants just make a person smell less tasty to biting insects.
Have you or a family member used an over-the-counter medicine this week?

What are some reasons for using an OTC medicine?

So, have you or has anyone in your family used an over-the-counter medicine this week?

(It is effective to write down the medicine used by the individual or family member and the reason it was taken. Let the audience know if some of the examples provided are prescription medicines. If you are not sure, ask the person if the medicine was purchased with or without a prescription.)

Common reasons for using over-the-counter medicines include: minor aches and pains, fever, cold and allergy symptoms, diarrhea, upset stomach, and Athlete’s Foot.
Let’s take a couple of minutes and talk about how prescription and over-the-counter medicines are different and how they are the same.
Prescription and Over-the-Counter Medicines

How are they different? How are they the same?

**Prescription**
1. Ordered by a doctor
2. Bought at a pharmacy
3. Ordered for and used by only one person

**Over-the-Counter**
1. Can buy without a doctor’s order
2. Bought off the shelf in store aisles
3. May be used by more than one person for the same symptom or problem

**Both types of medicine:**
- Directions must be followed carefully and correctly
- Children should use only with permission of a parent or guardian
- A pharmacist can answer questions

Any medicine can cause harm if you use too much of the medicine or use it incorrectly. This is true for prescription and over-the-counter medicines.

For all medicines, you must read and follow the directions.

Children should use medicine only with permission from a parent or guardian.

If you have questions about a medicine, you can ask a pharmacist. If the pharmacist can’t answer your question, call your healthcare professional.
Important Medicine Rules

- Never share your prescription medicine with someone else.
- Never use someone else’s prescription medicine.
- With OTC medicine, always check the dose.
  - The right dose for you may be different than for your friend or family member.
How do you decide which medicine is the right OTC medicine for you?

Read the Drug Facts label

All OTC medicines have a Drug Facts label

Each of you has a label for “Feel Better” Cold and Fever Tablets. Next to the package label is the Drug Facts Label.

Every over-the-counter medicine in the United States has a Drug Facts Label that looks like this. While the information inside the box is different for each medicine, the design of the Drug Facts Label and the order of the different sections is always the same. This makes it easy to compare different medicines when you are trying to choose the right medicine for your problem. It also makes it easy to find the information you need to use your medicine correctly and safely.

Let’s take a closer look.
Up at the very top of the first column of the Drug Facts Label are sections called:
(click)
- Active ingredients
- Purposes
- Uses

(click)

These 3 sections talk about the medicine’s active ingredients and what they do.
Active Ingredients:
The parts of the medicine that make it work.

What does Drug Facts tell us about each active ingredient???

- Its name
- How much is in each pill or teaspoon (5 mL)
- What it does (its purpose or job)
- The problems it treats (its uses)

(Teach right off the slide)
Let's look at the label you have in front of you.

What does Feel Better Cold and Fever Tablets treat?

What are the active ingredients?

(Call on someone to provide one active ingredient and what it does. Call on a second person to provide the second active ingredient and what it does)

(Can then click through 4 clicks to demonstrate all the places on the label that shows us what the medicine treats and with what ingredients.)
Let's look at the label you have in front of you.

What does Feel Better Cold and Fever Suspension treat?

What are the active ingredients?

(Call on a student to provide one active ingredient and what it does. Call on a second student to provide the second active ingredient and what it does)

(Can then click through 4 clicks to demonstrate all the places on the label that shows us what the medicine treats and with what ingredients.)
Keisha is a college student living away from home for the first time. Classes have just started.

Today, Keisha is sick: stuffy nose, sore throat, aches all over.

She takes some Get Better cold and fever medicine.

Two hours later - bad headache. Wants to take usual headache medicine.

Calls Mom.

She calls her mom at work to ask if she can use these medicines together.
Can Keisha take these medicines together?

The label and Drug Facts for the medicine Keisha took this morning is on the left. (click)
The label and first part of Drug Facts for the headache medicine that Keisha would like to use now to treat her terrible headache is on the right.

Can Keisha take these two medicines together?

Is there any information on the labels that can help you decide?

(Let audience members offer reasons the medicines can or can not be used together. Try to lead them to look at the active ingredients if they don’t do it on their own.)

(Click)
Both of these medicines have acetaminophen as an active ingredient. If Keisha takes the right dose of both medicines, then she is taking twice the recommended dose of acetaminophen. This might not be a problem if she does it only once, but if Keisha keeps using both of these medicines 3 or 4 times per day for 2 or 3 days, she could really hurt herself. Too much acetaminophen can permanently damage your liver.

(click)
NO – Keisha should not use these medicines together.

What should Keisha do to find out what she can take for her headache? (Call her doctor or pharmacist.)
Now let’s look at the next part of the Drug Facts Label.

The part you see outlined in red on the slide takes up more than half of the Drug Facts Label…What is all this stuff?

(click)

Warnings!

Although this looks like a lot of words, it is very important information that you need to read before using your medicine each time.

Those of us who have trouble reading small print should take out our reading glasses or magnifying glass and make sure we read all of warnings before using a medicine.
The warnings section tells you:

- When you shouldn't use the medicine at all
- When you should talk to your doctor first
- How the medicine might make you feel
- When you should stop using the medicine
- Things you shouldn't do while taking the medicine.

(Teach from the slide)

If there is information in the Warnings section that you do not understand, your pharmacist can help.
Let’s talk about the Allergy Alert.

Have any of you had or do any of you know someone who has had an allergic reaction to a medicine?

What happened? (Take answers from participants)

When you have an allergic reaction, you may have: itching, rash, hives (blistery, itch skin bumps), swelling, fainting, or trouble breathing.

If you think you are allergic to a medicine, do not use it. The first reaction you have may only be a rash or hives, but if you use the medicine again, you may get a more severe reaction and stop breathing.

If you think that you or someone else is having an allergic reaction, call for help and contact a healthcare professional. Call 911 if someone has trouble breathing or faints.
Ask a doctor before use...
Ask a doctor or pharmacist before use...

- When to ask a doctor or pharmacist BEFORE using the medicine.
  - Some medical problems make medicine use less safe.
  - Some medicines should never be used together.

The *Ask a doctor before use*... and *Ask a doctor or pharmacist before use* sections are very similar.

These sections tell you when to ask a doctor or pharmacist before using the medicine.

(Teach the slide bullets)
The *When using this product* section gives you special information about using the medicine.

(click)

Some examples include:
(Read the examples off the slide)
Stop use and ask a doctor if...

- Reasons to stop taking a medicine include:
  - If you have an allergic reaction
  - If you have new problems like stomach pain, throwing up, or dizziness
  - If you are not feeling better after a certain number of days

(Teach from the slide)
Keep out of reach of children

- Young children may think medicine tastes REALLY GOOD.
- Medicine is not candy and can harm them if they take too much.
- If someone you know takes too much medicine or the wrong medicine, call the Poison Control Center for help.

Some of you may care for or live with young children.

Young children will pick up anything colorful or interesting. If it is small, they often put it in their mouth to see if it tastes good.

The companies that make children’s medicines make them taste good. This makes it easier for children to use the medicines when they are sick or having another health problem.

Some tablet medicines look a lot like bite-size candies. Liquid medicines can taste a lot like kids’ flavored drinks.

Medicine is not candy and can harm children if they take too much. It is very important to keep your medicines in a high, dry place out of the reach of children.

If someone you know takes too much medicine or the wrong medicine, tell an adult right away. Call the Poison Control Center for help. This phone number is on the back of the Medicines in My Home booklet.
Harry and Ann’s 50th anniversary
Harry’s joints are sore and stiff.
Stan offers Harry OTC ibuprofen.
Harry asks Ann what to do.

Harry is going to help you see what you have learned….

Harry and Ann are celebrating their 50th anniversary with friends.

Usually Harry’s joints don’t bother him much, but today they are sore and stiff. Harry is having trouble holding his glass and cutting the cake.

Stan offers him some OTC ibuprofen and tells him how well it works for his stiff joints when they act up.

Harry looks at the bottle and asks Ann what she thinks about using the medicine.

What should Ann tell Harry?
Ann carefully reads the label ......

Can this medicine treat Harry's sore, stiff joints?

YES

Ann reads the next part of the label.....The  Warnings

Ann takes out her reading glasses and carefully reads the label...

This medicine is a pain reliever/fever reducer. It is used to temporarily relieve minor aches and pains due to minor arthritis pain.

Can this medicine treat Harry's problem?

Yes.

Ann reads the next part of the label.....The  Warnings.
What does Ann know about Harry? Lots.

Harry is 75 years old, has high cholesterol, and had a stomach ulcer last year. His doctor treated him and he is better now.

Should Harry use this medicine?
Let’s check the label warnings: (click through three red shapes on drug facts)
• The label has a stomach bleeding warning that says the chance of stomach bleeding is higher if you have reached age 60 or if you have ever had stomach ulcers.
• The label also says to ask a doctor before use if you have had stomach ulcers or have reached age 60.

(click again)
No, Harry should not use the ibuprofen right now.

What should Harry do? (click)
He should ask his doctor or other healthcare professional about how to treat his pain.
Once you think you have found the right medicine for your problem...

What else do you need to know before you use your medicine?
How to use it.

Every Drug Facts label has a “Directions” section.
The directions tell you…..
(click)
• How much medicines to use
• How often to use it
• How long you can use it.

Using more medicine than directed may increase your chance of having an unwanted side effect from the medicine. Using less than directed may not work as well.

(click)

How should you measure your dose of medicine?

How you measure your medicine is very important.
You should always use a medicine measuring tool to measure liquid medicines. Kitchen silverware spoons are different sizes and will not give the exact dose.

A lot of liquid over-the-counter medicines for children and adults come with a little measuring cup like the one you see at the top of the slide. A lot of medicines for very young children come with a syringe so you can squirt the medicine into the back of their mouths. This is an easier way to have a small child take the right dose.

Many pharmacies will provide a medicine measuring spoon or syringe if you ask. Pharmacies also sell medicine measuring tools.

It is important to wash these measuring tools with soap and water after using them so they don’t pass germs from one person in your family to another.
Measuring Tools for Medicines

- Use the measuring spoon, cup, or syringe that comes with your medicine. This is the most exact way to measure your dose.
- If your medicine doesn’t come with a special measuring tool, ask for one at the pharmacy.
- A silverware spoon may hold the wrong amount of medicine.
- Make sure the tool can measure the right dose – check the markings on the tool.

You should always use a medicine measuring tool to measure liquid medicines. Kitchen silverware spoons are different sizes and will not give the exact dose.

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Many pharmacies will provide a medicine measuring spoon or syringe if you ask. Pharmacies also sell medicine measuring tools.

It is important to wash these measuring tools with soap and water after using them so they don’t pass germs from one person in your family to another.
Other information and Inactive ingredients

- Other information -
  - How to keep your medicine when you are not using it.

- Inactive ingredients - used to:
  - Form a pill
  - Add flavor or color
  - Make a tablet or film dissolve quickly
  - Help a medicine last longer

We are now at the very end of the Drug Facts Label.
(click)
(Teach from the slide)

An inactive ingredient may help the medicine last longer on the shelf.

People can have an allergy to an inactive ingredient, so it is a good idea to read this list.
Jon likes to bike at least 20 miles every weekend.

On this ride, he pulled a leg muscle and the pain is making it hard to walk around.

Jon took one tablet of over-the-counter ibuprofen.

After an hour, he was not any better, so he took another tablet.

Was this okay?
(click)
YES.

(click) If you look at the piece of the Drug Facts label at the bottom of the slide on the left, you see that ibuprofen is a pain reliever and that its uses include treatment of muscle aches.

(click) On the right, the directions say to take one tablet every 4 to 6 hours but that 2 tablets may be used if the pain does not respond to 1 tablet.
After taking two tablets of OTC ibuprofen, Jon feels better but not completely relieved.

Two hours later, he notices the pain is getting worse. He takes 3 more OTC ibuprofen tablets.

Based on the directions in the label, is this okay?

(click) No.

The directions do not say that it is okay to use three tablets of ibuprofen at the same time. Also, Jon needs to wait at least four hours after his first two tablets to take more medicine.

What should Jon have done instead?

(Take suggestions from participants)
Jon should have asked his pharmacist or doctor what to do instead. The pharmacist or doctor may have suggested using a different medicine or may have asked Jon to get examined by a doctor first.
What should Jon do instead?

- Jon should call his doctor or pharmacist.
- He should explain why he is in pain, the medicine he used, and how it worked.
- He should ask what to do next.
- Always tell your doctor and pharmacist all the medicines and dietary supplements you use.

After taking two tablets of OTC ibuprofen, Jon feels better but not completely relieved.

Two hours later, he notices the pain is getting worse. He takes 3 more OTC ibuprofen tablets.

Based on the directions in the label, is this okay?

(click) No.

The directions do not say that it is okay to use three tablets of ibuprofen at the same time. Also, Jon needs to wait at least four hours after his first two tablets to take more medicine.

What should Jon have done instead?
(Take suggestions from participants)
Jon should have asked his pharmacist or doctor what to do instead. The pharmacist or doctor may have suggested using a different medicine or may have asked Jon to get examined by a doctor first.
The very last section of the Drug Facts label gives you information about how to contact the company that makes the medicine. Sometimes you may have a question about the medicine. Sometimes you may have an unexpected reaction to a medicine.

If you have an unexpected reaction to a medicine, it is very important to call and let the company know. The companies that make medicines are required to keep track of all unexpected reactions to their medicines and report them to the Food and Drug Administration. The doctors and other health specialists at the FDA look at these reports and watch for any sign that a medicine may not be as safe as they thought.

Reports about medicines from people who use them provide important information.
Be Safe, Be Healthy!!

Choose and use your OTC medicines wisely.
Teach your family members to do the same.
Take Home Messages

- Read the label carefully.
  - The information you need to use your OTC medicine safely and correctly is in the Drug Facts label.

- OTC medicines are serious medicines.

We hope you will share this information with your family.
Thank you.
These slides can be integrated into the slide show if you download the Powerpoint show from the website. Different presenters have different audiences with different needs and different literacy levels.

Please adapt these materials to suit your needs and maximize the learning for your audience.

Thank you.
What is a “behind the counter” medicine?

- In the United States, we officially have only prescription and over-the-counter medicines.

- Some other countries in the world have a third class of medicines called behind the counter medicines. Pharmacists decide when these medicines should be dispensed.

(Read the slide first)

As of 2006, there are two over-the-counter medicines in the United States that are kept behind the pharmacy counter: Plan B due to an age limit and pseudoephedrine to help prevent its use in making illegal drugs.
Old Medicines: The expiration date

- All Over-the-Counter medicines have an expiration date on the label.
- If your medicine is past the expiration date, it may not work as well as it did before.
- It is best not to use medicines that are past the expiration date.
- Throw away expired medicines carefully.
  - The best place is a home hazards waste site.
  - If this is not possible, put expired medicines in a garbage can away from small children and pets.
Let's meet Tony.

Tony is in seventh grade. He is the goalie for his middle school soccer team and he is a very good player.

Today his team plays for the county championship, but Anthony woke up with really bad allergies. His nose is all stuffy and runny. His eyes are watery and he can’t stop sneezing. Anthony is really worried that his allergies will keep him from playing his best. What should he do?

(Someone may say…He should take some allergy medicine)

Should he just go off on his own and take some medicine?

No, Tony is not an adult. He should talk to his mom or dad about how he is feeling first.

So, Tony and his mom and dad go to the high cabinet where they store their medicine, and they start looking for the right kind of medicine for Tony’s allergy problems.
Up on the medicine shelf, Tony and his parents find this medicine. 

**Feel Better – Allergy Relief.**

Great! It is an allergy medicine.

What kinds of symptoms or problems does this medicine treat?

What is the active ingredient?

It says here that the active ingredient is chlorpheniramine (klor-fen-ear-u-mean), which is an antihistamine.

An antihistamine is the type of medicine that treats most allergy symptoms.

Now let's learn more about this medicine from the Drug Facts Label…
I don’t want you to try to read this whole label.

I want to focus on one particular warning in the *When using this product* section…. (click)

It says “You may get drowsy."

Is that a good thing? Tony needs to play in a soccer game. This might be a great medicine for him to take if it was bedtime, and he wanted his allergy symptoms and go to sleep. But it may not be the best choice for a medicine before his championship soccer game.

So, Tony and his parents look around a bit more through the medicines on the shelf and they find…. 
Hey, look at that. It is another “Feel Better” allergy medicine, but this one is called: **Feel Better Allergy and Congestion Relief**.

Let’s see how this medicine compares to the last one.

What kinds of problems does this medicine treat??

That’s right. This one still treats Anthony's sneezing and itchy, watery eyes, but it also treats his stuffy nose.

What are the active ingredients? Can we tell? This medicine has our old friend phenylephrine in it….what does the phenylephrine do? Yes, it treats the stuffy nose.

But look, it also has an antihistamine like the other allergy medicine did. Is this the same antihistamine or a different antihistamine than the one in the other box? (Flip back to slide 21 and then come back to slide 23).

This is a different antihistamine. Let’s look at the Drug Facts Label and see what this means for Anthony.
Again, don’t try to read this whole label. Let’s look at this one warning in the **When using this product section:**

(click)

It says, “Taking more than directed may cause drowsiness.”

Should Anthony ever take more than directed on the label? **NO.**

So, if Anthony follows directions and takes the correct dose of the medicine, this medicine should not make him sleepy. Also, this medicine will help his stuffy nose.

So, Anthony takes some Feel Better, Allergy and Congestion Relief, he feels better, and his team wins the game!

(If you click the megaphone in the lower left corner of the slide, the crowd will cheer Anthony’s victory).
The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is the part of our government that makes sure that:

• Medicines and vaccines are safe to use and do what they say they do

• Veterinary medicines are safe and do what they say they do for animals

• Devices and tools used in medicine are safe and work right (toothbrushes, contact lenses, X-ray machines, lasers)

• Cosmetics like make-up and skin lotions are safe.

Today we are going to be talking about the safe and correct use of medicines, mostly over-the-counter medicines. All of the prescription and over-the-counter medicines you use are approved by the FDA.