

## About Prescription Medicine

(Written prescription from doctor)

### Your child's medicine

- When picking up a new medicine, look closely at the label.
  - Be sure it tells you how much to give and when to give it.
  - Know what's in the medicine. Do not give your child more than one medicine with the same ingredient. This puts your child at risk.
  - Check the expiration date.
- Follow the directions, even if you have used the medicine before. Sometimes the directions change about how much medicine to give.
  - Give the correct amount at the correct time.
  - Give on a regular schedule for as long as the doctor ordered.
- Try to get all medicines from one pharmacy. It helps to have all of your child's information in one place.
- Keep a record of all medicines your child takes. Before your child starts a new medicine, be sure to ask the doctor or pharmacist if it is safe to take with other medicines. This includes over-the-counter (OTC) medicines, vitamins and herbal products.



**If you have questions, or something does not seem right, talk with your provider or pharmacist.**

### How do I measure liquid medicine?

- **Give the medicine with a syringe, medicine cup or dropper.** Proper dosing is important, especially for young children.
  - If a liquid medicine does not come with its own dosing device, ask your pharmacist to help you choose the best one for your child.
  - **Never** use kitchen teaspoons or tablespoons to give liquid medicine. They may give your child more or less medicine than they are supposed to have.
- When measuring liquid medicine, be sure to look at it at eye level. If using a dosing cup, measure on a flat surface. Do not hold it in your hand when measuring.



### How should I give my child medicine?

Read the bottle before you give the medicine.

- Some liquid medicines need to be shaken well before you give them.
- Some medicine can be mixed with food or liquid. Use only a small amount of food or liquid, so your child finishes all of it.
  - If your child does not finish the food or drink they will not get all the medicine.
  - **Liquid.** Ask the pharmacist if they can flavor the medicine.
  - **Tablet.** Teach your child to swallow the tablet. Many tablets cannot be crushed. Do not crush a tablet unless the doctor or pharmacist says it is okay.

## Giving medicine (continued)

- Do not skip doses. If you miss a dose, talk with your provider or pharmacist.
- If your child throws up a medicine in less than 30 minutes after you gave it, call the provider or pharmacist. Ask them if you can give another dose.
- Even if your child seems really sick, don't give more medicine than the label says. It won't help your child feel better faster, and it may cause harm.

## How should I store medicine?

- Store all medicine in a place your child cannot reach.
- Keep all medicines in their original packages and containers.
- **Do not** store medicine in a place that is too hot or too cold. The bathroom cabinet may not be the best place for your medicine.
- Always store adult and child preparations of liquid medicine in separate areas. This will decrease the chance of mixing up the containers by accident.
- Some liquid medicines need to be refrigerated. Be sure to read the label carefully to see how a medicine should be stored. If a medicine must be stored in the refrigerator, always store it on a high shelf towards the back so that a child can't reach it.



## How should I dispose of medicine

- Clean out your medicine cabinet. Unused medicines need to be disposed of safely.
- Many communities have a medicine take-back program. This is an easy way to get rid of your unused or expired medicines.
- Talk with your provider or pharmacist about disposal.

## Other

- **Do not combine any medicines.** This includes prescription medicines, over-the-counter (OTC) medicines, and herbal products. They may react with one another. Do not mix unless a doctor or pharmacist has told you it is okay.
- Keep track of how many refills are left. Talk with your child's doctor if more refills are needed. Call the pharmacy at least 5 days before a refill is needed.
- Always bring a list and all of your child's current medicine to appointments.
- Keep the Poison Control Center number (1-800-222-1222) in your home and cell phones. Also post the number on the refrigerator.



**ALERT: Call 9-1-1 if your child collapsed, is not breathing, or has a seizure.**

**This teaching sheet is meant to help you care for your child. It does not take the place of medical care. Talk with your healthcare provider for diagnosis, treatment, and follow-up.**