

# Healthy Living: Tips for Taking Over-the-Counter Medicine<sup>1</sup>

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Nonprescription, over-the-counter (OTC) medications are often a convenient and inexpensive way to treat minor health problems. However, OTC products are serious medicines that can cause unwanted problems if used incorrectly. If you are taking OTC products, here are some guidelines to help you use them safely:

## Read the Label Carefully

Before taking any product, always read the label. Follow all directions and warnings. This is especially important if you have allergies or chronic health conditions.



## More Safety Tips

- Store medicine in a cool, dry place.
- Keep all medicine in the original containers.
- Keep medicine out of the reach of children (don't forget visiting grandchildren!)

## More is Not Better!

Take only the amount directed on the label and don't take the drug any longer than recommended.

## Check the Expiration Date

Check the expiration dates on your medicines twice a year. Throw away outdated products but do **NOT** flush them down the toilet.

## Inspect Before You Buy

Check the package and medicine for signs of tampering. If the product is open or the seal is broken, don't buy it.



Remember, OTC products can relieve symptoms, not cure a disease. See your doctor if symptoms persist.

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