

Non-prescription drugs can harm kids

Non-prescription, or over-the-counter drugs are more numerous than ever today. More than 600 products sold over the counter use ingredients or dosage strengths available only by prescription 20 years ago. These are rarely packaged specifically for children, so it's important to take special precautions when giving them to youngsters.

Here are some tips from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration for safe use of non-prescription drugs with children.

Children aren't simply smaller versions of adults, so don't estimate the dose based on their size. Read the label carefully and follow all directions, including age limits, listed on the label.

Double check instructions that call for exact quantities of drugs. Be sure you know the difference between a tablespoon and a teaspoon. The difference between the two is significant for children.

Follow dose instructions. If the directions call for two teaspoons, use a measuring spoon or dosing cup marked in teaspoons rather than kitchen silverware.

Don't double the dosage just because your child seems sicker than the last time.

Talk to your doctor or pharmacist before giving your child two medicines at the same time.

Never let children take medications by themselves.

Never call medicine candy. If kids come across the medicine on their own, they are likely to remember it as candy.

Use One-Call Center to find out where utilities are before you dig

Did you know that anyone digging more than 12 inches down is required under Oregon law to call the Oregon Utility Notification Center (otherwise known as the One-Call Center)?

This free safety service will inform all utility companies with buried service lines anywhere near where you plan to dig. The utility companies will then locate and mark the underground lines using color-coded paint.

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ment is obvious: No one wants to disrupt water, power, gas, phones or, especially, 9-1-1 lines, but it happens all too frequently when people dig without knowing the exact location or depth of the lines.

The One-Call Center may be reached toll-free at 1-800-332-2344. It is best to allow two days before you plan to start digging.

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