

Children's Health

A Little Education Goes A Long Way When It Comes To Treating Children's Colds, Survey Shows

(NAPSA)—A recent survey revealed many parents could benefit from more education when treating their children's colds. In fact, the way parents administer certain over-the-counter cold medications can be harmful to their child's health.

According to the survey, 61 percent of American parents said they had simultaneously treated a child under 12 with two or more cough and cold medications, raising the risk of overmedication. In addition, almost half of parents surveyed said they don't usually read the ingredients of their children's over-the-counter cough and cold medications.

This, doctors point out, can be a concern. Certain cold medications contain ingredients also found in common over-the-counter pain relievers and fever reducers. Yet one in four parents said they are unaware that giving a child both a cold medication and a pain reliever or fever reducer may cause them to ingest twice the recommended dosage of such ingredients.

"To safely care for their children, parents should choose products that only treat the symptoms the sick child has and read medication labels carefully," explains Dr. Mary Jo DiMilia, Manhattan pediatrician. Doctors recommend the following steps the next time your child shows signs of a cold:

- Make the child comfortable. For babies, clear nasal congestion with a rubber suction bulb. Give older children plenty of tissues.
- Consider a cool-mist humidifier, which may help ease nasal congestion. Make sure to clean and dry it daily.

- See that he or she gets plenty of rest and drinks extra fluids. Chicken soup is a tried-and-true remedy that may help.

- Never give a child aspirin unless directed by a physician. It may increase the risk of potentially fatal Reye's syndrome.

- Choose medications that are made for children. Look for those that are alcohol-free and target only the symptoms your child, in fact, has.

"To safely care for their children, parents should choose products that only treat the symptoms the sick child has and read medication labels carefully," explains Dr. Mary Jo DiMilia. 

If your child does not have a fever, it is not necessary to give him or her a fever reducing medication. PediaCare, an over-the-counter cough, cold and allergy medication, does not contain any pain relievers or fever reducers and is available in a variety of formulations.

"The Long-Acting Cough Plus Cold formulation works for up to eight hours," says Dr. DiMilia, "the equivalent of an entire school day." PediaCare is the only brand of cough and cold medicine designed especially for children, so it's gentle, alcohol-free and comes in child-resistant safety packaging.

The PediaCare family of products contains the active ingredients physicians recommend most for treating children's coughs and colds. Available in two forms, liquid and drops, PediaCare offers products for both infants and children. You can learn more online at www.pediacare.com or by calling 1-888-474-3099.