



adherence starts
with knowledge

How to Read Medicine Labels

There are 2 types of medicine. The first type is prescribed by your doctor. The second type is over-the-counter (OTC). This means you do not need a prescription from your doctor.

Both types of medicine come with instructions on the label. It is important to read these instructions. Not following them may affect your health.

Below and on the back of this page are sample labels for both prescription and OTC medicines. They will help you know what to look for the next time you pick up your medicine.

Prescription Medicine Label

Number the pharmacy uses to identify your prescription. This is often called the prescription number

Doctor's name

Pharmacy name and address

Pharmacy phone number

Date prescription was filled

Name of person who was prescribed the medicine

Directions on how much medicine to take and when to take it

Name and strength of medicine

Number of tablets in this prescription

Number of refills before certain date

Do not use medicine past this date

Local Pharmacy
123 MAIN STREET
ANYTOWN, USA 11111
800-555-5555

DR C. JONES
DATE 06/23/11

Rx# 0060023-08291

JANE SMITH
456 MAIN STREET ANYTOWN, US 11111

TAKE TWO TABLETS BY MOUTH TWICE DAILY

METFORMIN 500 MG TABLETS

QTY 120

4 REFILLS BEFORE 06/23/14

USE BEFORE 06/23/14

Rx ONLY

If you read a label and still have questions, ask your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist for help.

(see over)

Review the sample label for over-the-counter (OTC) medicines below. This will help you know what to look for the next time you pick up your OTC medicine.

Over-the-Counter (OTC) Medicine Label

Chemical name for the medicine	<h3>Drug Facts</h3> <p>Active ingredient (in each tablet) Purpose Chlorpheniramine maleate 2 mg Antihistamine</p>	Type of medicine						
Symptoms or diseases that the medicine treats		<p>Uses temporarily relieves these symptoms due to hay fever or other upper respiratory allergies: ■ sneezing ■ runny nose ■ itchy, watery eyes ■ itchy throat</p>						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When not to use this medicine • When to stop taking it • When to see a doctor • Possible side effects 	<p>Warnings Ask a doctor before use if you have ■ glaucoma ■ a breathing problem such as emphysema or chronic bronchitis ■ trouble urinating due to an enlarged prostate gland</p> <p>Ask a doctor or pharmacist before use if you are taking tranquilizers or sedatives</p> <p>When using this product ■ You may get drowsy ■ Avoid alcoholic drinks ■ Alcohol, sedatives, and tranquilizers may increase drowsiness ■ Be careful when driving a motor vehicle or operating machinery ■ Excitability may occur, especially in children</p> <p>If pregnant or breastfeeding, ask a health professional before use. Keep out of reach of children. In case of overdose, get medical help or contact a Poison Control Center right away.</p>							
How to store the medicine safely	<p>Directions</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Adults and children 12 years and over</td> <td>Take 2 tablets every 4 to 6 hours; not more than 12 tablets in 24 hours</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Children 6 years to under 12 years</td> <td>Take 1 tablet every 4 to 6 hours; not more than 6 tablets in 24 hours</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Children under 6 years</td> <td>Ask a doctor</td> </tr> </table>	Adults and children 12 years and over	Take 2 tablets every 4 to 6 hours; not more than 12 tablets in 24 hours	Children 6 years to under 12 years	Take 1 tablet every 4 to 6 hours; not more than 6 tablets in 24 hours	Children under 6 years	Ask a doctor	Directions on how much medicine to take and when to take it
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Children 6 years to under 12 years	Take 1 tablet every 4 to 6 hours; not more than 6 tablets in 24 hours							
Children under 6 years	Ask a doctor							
	<p>Other information Store at 20-25°C (68-77°F) ■ Protect from excessive moisture</p>							
	<p>Inactive ingredients D&C yellow no. 10, lactose, magnesium stearate, microcrystalline cellulose, pregelatinized starch</p>	Other ingredients in the medicine, such as colors or flavorings						

If you read a label and still have questions, ask your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist for help.