

11. **Storage instructions**—how and where to keep the medicine.
12. **Expiration**—date after which the medicine may not work, or may be harmful to use.

EVALUATE YOUR CHOICES –

Weigh the Benefits and Risks After you have all the information, think carefully about your choices. Think about the helpful effects as well as the possible unwanted effects. Decide which are most important to you. This is how you weigh the benefits and risks. The expert advice from your physician / pharmacist and the information you give the physician / pharmacist can help guide you in making the decision that is right for you.

www.fda.gov/medsinmyhome

Over-the-Counter Medications

Step-by-step guide on how to select over-the-counter (OTC) medication

KidsMeds Pharmacy is here to help you find the right product!



Phone: (205) 824- 0775

Find the Facts:

Before buying any medication, use the following steps to learn as much as you can about the medication. It all starts by reading the label.

1. **What are the brand and generic names?**
2. **Active ingredients?** To make sure you are not using more than one medication with the same active ingredient.
3. **Inactive ingredients?** If you have any problems with ingredients in medicines such as colors, flavors, starches, and sugars.
4. **Uses? ("Indications" and "Contraindications")** - why you will be using it, and when the medicine should / should not be used.
5. **Warnings. ("precautions")** - safety measures to make sure the medicine is used the right way, and to avoid harm.

6. **Possible interactions** - substances that should not be used while using the medicine. Find out if other OTC medications, prescriptions, food, or dietary supplements could cause problems with the medicines.
7. **Side effects? ("adverse reactions")** - unwanted effects that the medicine could cause, and what to do if you get them.
8. **Possible tolerance, dependence, or addiction** - problems that some medicines can cause, and what to do to avoid them.
9. **Overdose** - what to do if you use too much.
10. **Directions** - usual dose, what to do if you miss a dose; special directions on how to use the medicine, such as whether to take it with or without food