

# The Wellness Family

The Doctors of Priority Health Chiropractic and Massage Keep You Informed

## The **F Y I** on **O T C** s

Since the 60's parents have been trying to tell their children to "just say no" to drugs, but TV commercials, parent magazines and the "wellness" visits to the pediatrician's office have sent a completely different message. In the past two decades our society has accepted the idea that drugs are okay. We've forgotten that drugs are chemicals with potentially harmful side effects.

### What's Happened?

We have to ask ourselves why we've complacently accepted the drugging of our children without any question? Well, there could be several reasons:

- Advertising has worked
- Old habits die hard
- The "Western Culture" of convenience
- We don't have time to for either ourselves or our children to be sick

What we've forgotten is to place a higher value on these simple truths!

1. All drugs have side effects
2. Drugs may cause cumulative and irreversible long-term damage
3. Drugs don't cure – at best they simply mask the symptoms; at worst they interfere with healing
4. Not all drugs have been tested for pediatric use

### Pediatric Over-the-Counter Medications?

More and more studies are done about the growing trend of pediatricians recommending over-the-counter drugs (OTCs). A study published in the May 2004 issue of Pediatrics magazine revealed that of 671 pediatricians surveyed, 75% admitted that they had advised concerned parents to make use of an over-the-counter drug; 50% had even recommended a sleep aid for use on children. [1]

All of this despite the fact that these drugs were never intended for use on children. That's why the information provided on most over-the-counter labels

are merely "guesstimates" and why in most cases there is no proper dosage recommendation for a child.

So, why do parents accept this advice and reach for an over-the-counter drug?

- Their child is in pain.
- Their child is running a fever.
- Their child is suffering from inflammation.
- Their child is suffering with cold symptoms.
- Their child has a headache.
- Their child is teething.
- Their child isn't sleeping and so neither is anyone else.



*"In the past two decades our society has accepted the idea that drugs are okay."*

So what's the big deal? There may seem to be valid reasons to give your child an over-the-counter drug. Fact is, the dangers far outweigh the benefits.

### The Facts Speak for Themselves

The problem is, when a parent is provided medical advice they naturally assume that the recommended treatment is going to be safe and effective; that's just not always the case.

Safe? Over-the-counter medications all have serious side effects; some are long-term and even deadly.

- An average of 27,000 infants and children receive accidental overdoses of Children's Tylenol every year with long-term ill effects
- Aspirin causes upset stomach, heartburn, nausea, vomiting, increased chance of bleeding and may cause an allergic reaction

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- Ibuprofen causes upset stomach and heartburn, which have been known to cause esophageal damage
- Antihistamines have been known to cause fast or irregular heartbeat, fever, stomach pain, dizziness, seizures and tightness in the chest

Effective? Studies are proving not all over-the-counter medications are effective.

- In 2002, the British Medical Journal revealed, "over-the-counter cough medicines for acute cough cannot be recommended because there is no good evidence for their effectiveness". [2]
- In 2004, Pediatrics magazine reported that a specific study of 100 children with upper respiratory infections (colds) revealed that the active ingredients in cough medicines were no better than a placebo. [3]

Even worse than this ineffectualness were the adverse effects. Cough suppressants have been known to cause insomnia and antihistamines may cause drowsiness.

### In Summary

The facts speak for themselves: chemicals belong in labs not in our children. It's important to note that in most instances the OTC can make matters worse by delaying healing – not to mention the always-present risk of overdose. Take a moment next time you're ready to reach for the OTC and reach for the phone instead. Call The Doctors of Priority Health Chiropractic and Massage and ask about alternatives; there's no harm in trying something safer first.

1. William Parks D.C.; Are Your Children Being Unnecessarily Medicated
2. Schroeder K, Fahey T. BMJ. 2002; 324:329
3. Paul IM, Yoder KI, Crowell KR et al. Pediatrics. 2004; 114(1):e85-e90

### First Three Steps Before Reaching for an OTC!

1. Wait and Watch – your child's natural immune system will usually take care of itself in 72 hours
2. Speak to your family chiropractor about a successful home remedy
3. Get your child adjusted and help them develop their bodies natural defenses against most childhood illnesses.

#### *Is your child frequently sick?*

- *Air out your home and clean under the sink and refrigerator (these are hidden homes for mold and other airborne allergens)*
- *Dust frequently making sure to shake out carpets and stuffed animals as dust is a common allergen*
- *Frequently wash your child's hands with soap and warm water*
- *Eliminate smoking in the home*
- *Make sure your child gets enough rest*
- *Remember your child's regular Chiropractic adjustments to strengthen their immune system and develop their wellness*

Dear Parent,

*The Doctors of Priority Health Chiropractic and Massage are dedicated to providing you with the absolute best in family wellness care. Along with that dedication comes an understanding that an informed parent makes wise decisions for their child. Don't forget to take a moment to ask The Doctors of Priority Health Chiropractic and Massage any questions that you may have regarding your family's overall wellness.*

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