

All about Medicines

This month in THE GREAT BODY SHOP, we will be talking about medicines. Please take a few minutes to talk about the subject at home, and to do the Homework with your child. The lessons are:

Lesson 1: All about Medicines

Lesson 2: Who Can Give You Medicine?

Lesson 3: What Does Medicine Do?

Lesson 4: Medicine Can Mean Trouble

About Drugs

In this unit, we will talk a little bit about drugs. Your child will learn that medicines are drugs, and that all drugs can be dangerous.

Your child has been taught that because medicines are drugs, we must be very careful with them. He or she must only take medicines from a doctor, parent, or from an adult (such as the school nurse) who has the permission of a parent. You can help strengthen this message by talking to your child about drugs. Let him/her know that you believe taking illegal drugs is wrong. Tell your child often that you think he/she is too special to ever hurt his/her body and mind with drugs.

Medicine-proof Your Home

- Keep all medicines in a cabinet or closet on a shelf that is too high for children to reach. Put a lock on the door.
- Never store medicine in anything but the original container.
- Put clear tape over the label when you buy prescription medicine. It will keep the label from falling off.
- More than one third of all cases of childhood poisoning from prescription drugs involves a grandparent's medicine. Don't let anyone leave medicine sitting on a counter in order to remember to take it. Instead, write a reminder note and post it where you'll see it. Once you take the medicine, put it away immediately.
- Check the expiration dates on the medicines in your home. Throw out any old medicines.
- Remember that safety caps can help keep children from opening bottles, but they are not foolproof.
- Never let your child take an extra vitamin because "it tastes good" or because he or she didn't eat well that day. While one extra may not do any harm, allowing him or her to take it would give the impression that following rules about medicine is not that important, and that it's OK to take more of medicines that taste good.
- Don't leave a child's medication sitting on the table next to his or her bed. Too often, a child will wake up, see the medication, and decide to sample it.
- Never let family members share prescription medicine, unless you check with your doctor first.
- Re-read the directions each time you take medicine or you give it to your child. Don't rely on your memory of the dose!
- Keep the number for the Poison Control Center by the phone. 1-800-222-1222
- Make sure your baby-sitter knows what medicine your child needs and how much to take. Write the amount down. Don't rely on your child to tell the baby-sitter about his or her medicine.

