

New Jersey Poison Control Center



HEALTH ADVISORY

*Always Check Medicine Labels for
Active Ingredients*

ACCIDENTAL OVERDOSE IS A SERIOUS RISK DURING "SNIFFLE SEASON"

Many people turn to over-the-counter (OTC or nonprescription) medicines to treat their cold, flu, COVID-19, or pain symptoms. OTC products can be bought without a prescription at local convenience stores, pharmacies, supermarkets, and online. However, having so many options available can often lead to confusion when it comes to choosing the right product for symptom relief.

It's essential to recognize that while over-the-counter medicines are widely available and commonly used, there can be a false sense of safety regarding the risk of dangerous adverse effects, including the potential for overdose.

Bruce Ruck
Managing Director
[New Jersey Poison Control Center](#)
[Rutgers New Jersey Medical School](#)



People of all ages are at risk of serious health effects from taking too much medicine, especially children and older adults.

1-800-222-1222



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MANY COLD AND FLU MEDICINES USE THE SAME ACTIVE INGREDIENTS

Two commonly used active ingredients found in many prescription and over-the-counter medicines, namely acetaminophen (found in Tylenol) and ibuprofen (found in Advil), are frequently used to treat winter illness symptoms and pain.

**WHEN USED ACCORDING TO THE
DIRECTIONS ON THE LABEL, AND
NOT MORE THAN THE MAXIMUM
DAILY DOSE, THESE MEDICINES
ARE SAFE AND EFFECTIVE.**

However, it's important to note that taking too much of either of these medicines, either alone or in combination with other medicines, can result in unexpected harmful effects, including organ failure and death.

**ACETAMINOPHEN IS FOUND
IN OVER 600 OTC AND
PRESCRIPTION MEDICINES.**

Most people are unaware that many multi-symptom products use acetaminophen or ibuprofen as one of their active ingredients.

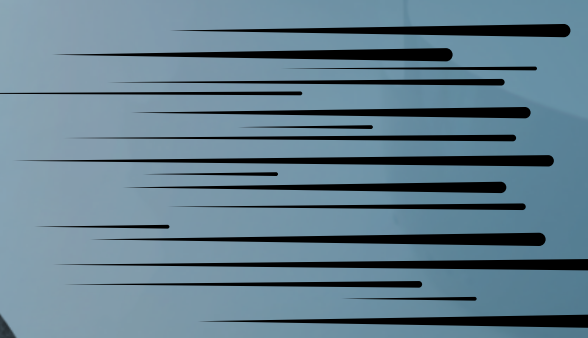


IT CAN BE EASY TO
GIVE OR TAKE MORE
ACETAMINOPHEN
OR IBUPROFEN
THAN *intended*



*Be careful when using
more than one medicine
to treat symptoms*

The medical providers at the New Jersey Poison Control Center can help callers of all ages understand which medicines would best to help their symptoms or provide medical treatment advice if someone consumed too much medicine.



SAFETY TIPS

**AVOID AN ACCIDENTAL
OVERDOSE WITH COLD
AND FLU MEDICINES**



DON'T TAKE TOO MUCH OF AN ACTIVE INGREDIENT

Always check the active ingredients when taking more than one medicine for symptoms. This will prevent doubling up on active ingredients.



NEVER TAKE MORE THAN THE RECOMMENDED MAXIMUM DAILY DOSE



ONLY USE PRODUCTS THAT TREAT THE SYMPTOMS YOU CURRENTLY HAVE



AVOID DRINKING ALCOHOL WHILE TAKING PRESCRIPTION OR OTC MEDICINES

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MEASURE YOUR MEDICINE

Only use a dosing tool such as a medicine spoon, dropper, syringe, or cup when measuring liquid medicine. Do not use a kitchen soup spoon to measure medicine because the dose will not be accurate.



NEVER GIVE CHILDREN MEDICINE THAT IS MADE FOR ADULTS

Children should only be given medicine specifically formulated for them and never more than the maximum daily dose.



INFANTS AND YOUNG CHILDREN MUST ONLY BE GIVEN MEDICINE ACCORDING TO THEIR WEIGHT, NOT THEIR AGE



FOR QUESTIONS AND CONCERNS

If you have questions about dosing, active ingredients, warnings, and potentially dangerous interaction, call the New Jersey Poison Control Center at 1-800-222-1222 (Poison Help line).



Get Free Medical Help 1-800-222-1222

Medical specialists are available to provide information, answer questions, and provide emergency support 24 hours a day

Anyone can call for medical help – children, teens, and adults

[NJPoisonCenter.org](https://www.njpoisoncenter.org)

NJ Poison Control Center

is a medical resource for both the public and healthcare providers.

If you think someone consumed too much acetaminophen, ibuprofen, or other medicine, contact the New Jersey Poison Control Center immediately for medical treatment advice.

Call the NJ Poison Control Center at 1-800-222-1222 or [Chat Here](#)

If someone is not breathing, hard to wake up, or having a seizure, call 9-1-1

