



Staying safer around analgesics

People sometimes take pain relievers to stop pain, reduce a fever or reduce inflammation. This information sheet explains some of the things you need to know about analgesics and their use.

Another name for pain relievers is analgesics. There are three different types of analgesics:

- **paracetamol** eg Panadol, Dymadon
- **aspirin** eg Disprin, Aspro Clear
- **combination products** which may contain aspirin or paracetamol and a drug called codeine eg Disprin Forte, Painstop syrup, Panadeine.

Some analgesics can be purchased over-the-counter. Other stronger analgesics can only be bought at a chemist and with a doctor's prescription.

Analgesics won't:

- cure what is causing the pain
- prevent a headache
- give you more energy
- calm you down if you are upset
- help you to sleep.

Using analgesics

- Use only as directed – taking more than this dose can cause harmful effects on the kidneys and liver.
- Children should only take analgesics when given to them by a trusted adult.
- Children under 12 should never use aspirin because it can damage their stomach and intestines.
- Check for 'doubling up' on analgesics by reading the ingredient list of other medicines such as cold and cough remedies.
- Don't use paracetamol past its expiry date as it becomes poisonous.
- Don't use for more than 3 days in a row.

Over-use of analgesics may cause vomiting, stomach ulcers, bad headaches, tummy pains, dizziness, rashes or ringing in the ears.

Giving children a minor analgesic

- Do you tell your child why they are being given the analgesic?
- Do you show your child the packet?
- Do you know the expiry date of the medication?
- Do you give your child the correct dose?
- Do you try alternatives such as sleep, water or rest before giving your child medicine (if appropriate)?
- Do you consult with a doctor if prolonged and regular use is required?

We have been learning about analgesics and why these drugs must be used with care. Talk with your child and find out what they know and what they might still want to know about these drugs.



Thank you for playing a vital role in your child's health and drug education.