

## Parents:

Acetaminophen in pain relief medicines can cause liver damage.



### Drug Facts

Active ingredient	Purpose
Acetaminophen.....	Pain reliever/fever reducer



**U.S. Department of Health and Human Services**  
 Food and Drug Administration  
[www.fda.gov/drugs](http://www.fda.gov/drugs)  
 1-888-INFO-FDA

**Acetaminophen** (a·SEET·a·MIN·o·fen) is an active ingredient in many over-the-counter and prescription medicines that help relieve pain and reduce fever.

To find out if an over-the-counter medicine contains acetaminophen, look for “acetaminophen” on the **Drug Facts** label. If a prescription medicine contains acetaminophen, the label may not spell out the whole word or may have the abbreviation “APAP.”

### **Liver damage:**

Giving your child more acetaminophen than directed on the label can cause liver damage and may lead to death.

### **To safely give acetaminophen:**

- Make sure you know the active ingredients in all the medicines your child is using.
- Make sure your child doesn't get more than one medicine containing acetaminophen in a day.
- Make sure you understand:
  - how much acetaminophen you can give at one time (dose)
  - how many hours you must wait before you can give acetaminophen again
  - how many times you can give it each day
  - when you should not give it
  - when you should talk to your child's doctor
- If the medicine is a liquid, use the measuring tool that comes with the medicine.

**If your child swallows too much acetaminophen, get medical help right away, even if your child doesn't feel sick.**

For immediate help, call:  
**Poison Control Center**  
1-800-222-1222  
or  
911

### **The first signs of liver damage:**

Your child can develop liver damage after using too much acetaminophen. Symptoms may not appear for days and early symptoms may seem like the flu, like loss of appetite, nausea, and vomiting.

**To prevent your child from getting too much medicine** keep a daily record of the medicines you give to your child. Share this information with anyone who is helping care for your child. Write:

- your child's name, weight, and age
- the medicine's name and active ingredient(s)
- the formula, for example, infant or children's formula
- the dose you gave, and
- the hour of the day your child got the medicine

Also, ask your pharmacist for child safety caps on all your family's prescription medicines. Keep all medicines where they can't be seen or reached by children and pets. A locked box, cabinet, or closet is best.

### **For more information:**

- talk to your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist
- visit FDA online at [www.fda.gov/drugs](http://www.fda.gov/drugs)
- call FDA at 1-888-INFO-FDA, or
- email questions to [druginfo@fda.hhs.gov](mailto:druginfo@fda.hhs.gov)