

STEPS

TO INDEPENDENT LIVING



THIRD
EDITION

How to Get Well When You're Sick or Hurt

Nancy Lobb

illustrated by David Strauch

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To the Student

Living on your own can be a great experience! You can choose and decorate your own place. You can decide for yourself what and when to eat. You can set your own hours. In short, you are free to make your own choices about your lifestyle.

Along with these freedoms comes responsibility. Living on your own means it's up to you to take care of yourself when you're sick or hurt. You are now the one who must be sure your nutritional, physical, and emotional needs are met. No one will be watching over you to ensure your personal safety. No one will be looking to make sure you make good decisions about alcohol, drugs, and tobacco. It's up to you!

But that's not all! You must make good choices as you choose and set up your home. You must keep your home safe and clean. And you must use your money wisely to meet your needs.

You will have a better experience living on your own if you are prepared to meet your new responsibilities. The six books in the *Steps to Independent Living* series will teach you the skills you need to make it on your own.

In this book, *How to Get Well When You're Sick or Hurt*, you will learn about:

- taking care of yourself when you're sick
- seeing a doctor
- using medicines wisely
- taking care of yourself when you're hurt

We hope this information helps prepare you for the day you start living on your own!

Self-Test

How well can you care for yourself when you're sick or hurt?
Circle YES or NO for each question.

1. Can you use a thermometer to take your temperature?
YES NO
2. Do you know the best way to avoid getting a cold or the flu?
YES NO
3. Do you know when to call the doctor when you've got a cold?
YES NO
4. Do you know why you should use over-the-counter cold/flu remedies with care?
YES NO
5. Do you know the symptoms of the flu?
YES NO
6. Do you know three ways to protect yourself from getting the flu?
YES NO
7. Do you know what medicines you should have in your home?
YES NO
8. Do you know how to read directions on medicine labels?
YES NO

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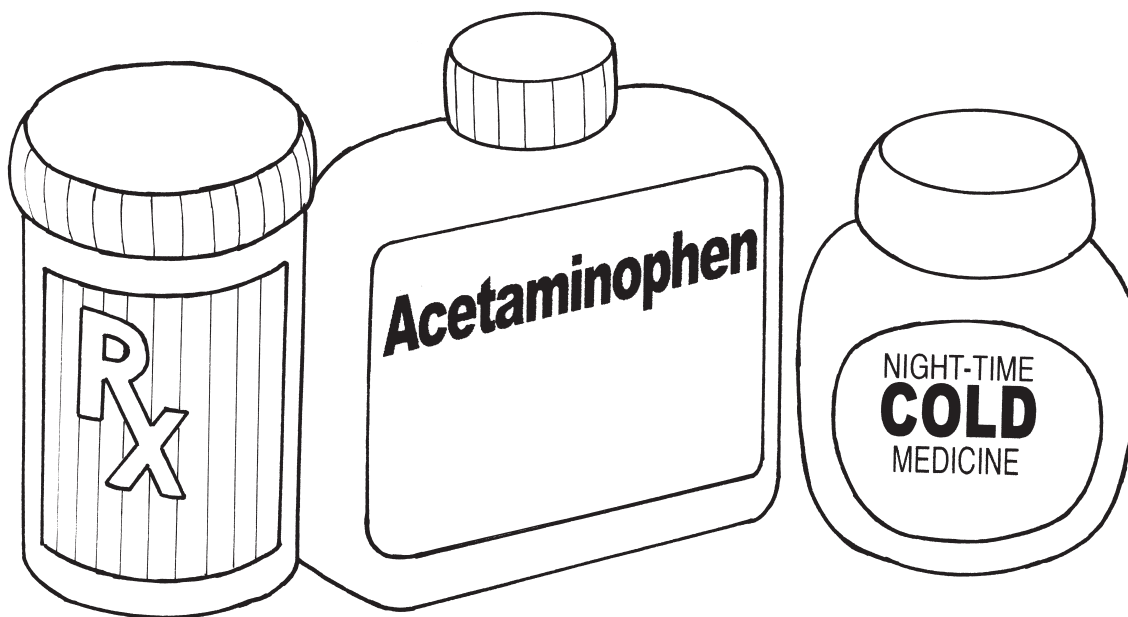
Medicine Basics

There are two basic types of medicines or drugs:

1. A **prescription drug** is one that can only be ordered by a doctor. You must take the written prescription to the pharmacist, who then fills the doctor's order.
2. You can buy **over-the-counter (OTC) drugs** in a grocery store or drug store without a doctor's order. Examples of these are aspirin and cold medicines.

Prescription drugs are stronger than over-the-counter drugs. You must use all drugs with care. Take prescription drugs only if needed and only as directed.

Any drug can have more than one effect on the body. Unwanted or unneeded effects are called side effects. For example, some cold medicines may cause you to become too sleepy to drive a car safely.



Read That Label!

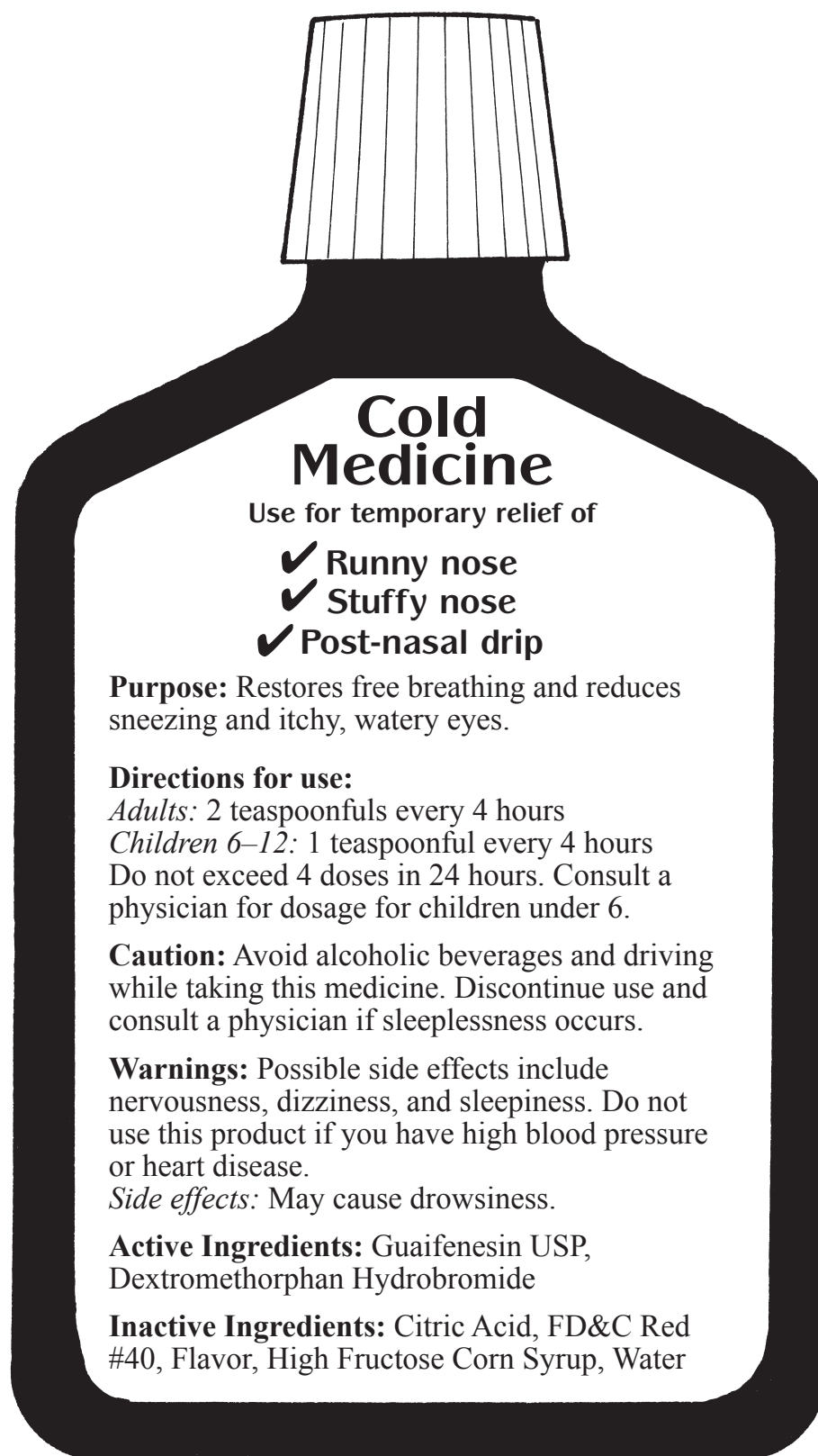
Reading the label is the most important part of using over-the-counter (OTC) medicines. The label has directions for how to use the product. It also has safety information.

If you read the label and have questions about the product, talk to your doctor or pharmacist.

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) requires that all labels include basic information listed in the same order. This makes it easier for patients to read and understand what is written on labels.

On the next page is an example of a label from a cold medicine. Look at the label. Locate each piece of information on the label.

1. **Active Ingredient:** the amount of the active ingredient in each unit of medicine
2. **Purpose:** the product category (Example: cough medicine)
3. **Uses:** symptoms or diseases the product is used to treat or prevent
4. **Warnings:** a list of warnings about the safe use of the product
5. **Directions:** how much to take, how to take, how often to take, and who should take the product
6. **Other Information:** how to store the product and other needed information
7. **Inactive Ingredients:** substances that are in the product but do not treat illness (Examples: colors or flavors)



Questions

Answer these questions about the cold medicine label on the previous page.

1. Is acetaminophen one of the active ingredients in this product?
2. Is this medicine to be used for minor sore throat pain?
3. What should you do if you take this medicine and it keeps you up at night?
4. Is it OK to drink alcoholic beverages while taking this medicine?
5. What are the directions for a child age 8?

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