

# LESSON 2 Using Medicines Safely

**SCOUTStrong**

Be MedWise Award



— **Being MedWise** —

Helps Us Use Over-the-Counter  
Medications Wisely



BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA®

EDUCATE *before*  
**YOU MEDICATE**  
The NCPiE  
Coalition working  
together to promote  
safe medicine use  
National Council on Patient Information/ and Education  
[www.talkaboutrx.org](http://www.talkaboutrx.org)



## SCOUTStrong “Be MedWise” Award Overview

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The Boy Scouts of America and the National Council on Patient Information and Education (NCPIE) developed the SCOUTStrong “Be MedWise” Award as an interactive way to educate members of the Boy Scouts program, the Venturing program and American youth in general about the benefits of over-the-counter (OTC) medicines and the harm that they can cause if they are misused.

This award is designed to compliment existing Boy Scout and Venturing programming. This award’s training curriculum consists of four lessons that could be reviewed at the start of a unit meeting, taking no more than 12 to 15 minutes each. The program is self-paced which allows the unit leader to determine how quickly it is completed.

**This curriculum has been prepared specifically for ages 11-17 and each lesson must be followed specifically as written.**



LESSON 2 TIMING: 12-15 MIN



## Using Over-the-Counter Medicines Safely

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### TEACHING POINTS/BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

...All of the prescription and over-the-counter medicines you use are approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). The FDA is the part of our country's government that makes sure our medicines are safe and and effective.

...Review the following 12 Tips For Using OTC Medicines Safely in Table 2.

## 12 Tips for Using OTC Medicines Safely

- 1 Talk to your parent or guardian before using any medicine.
- 2 Read the Drug Facts label—ALL of it—every time you use a medicine, and follow the directions. Use a medicine only if you know what it is and what it's for.
- 3 Choose a medicine that treats only the problems you have. Using medicine you don't need won't help you.
- 4 Check the active ingredients in all your medicines. These are the ingredients in the medicine that make it work. Two medicines with the same active ingredient should not be used together because you could get too much; too much can hurt you.
- 5 Take the medicine dose listed on the label. Don't take more. If this dose doesn't help you feel better, talk to your doctor.
- 6 Tell your parent, guardian, or school nurse if you don't feel better or if you feel worse after using a medicine.
- 7 Use medicine only as long as the label says. If you think you need the medicine for a longer time, talk to your doctor.
- 8 Talk to your parent, doctor, nurse, or pharmacist if you have questions about your medicine or how it should make you feel.
- 9 Tell your pharmacist and doctor or nurse ALL of the medicines and dietary supplements you use.
- 10 Keep medicine in the bottle, box, or tube it came in. That will make the directions easy to find.
- 11 Keep medicines that don't need to go in the refrigerator in a safe, dry place where they can't be seen or reached by younger children or pets. This helps medicine last longer and helps prevent medicine accidents.
- 12 If it is past the date on a medicine's package, the medicine may not work as well. Have your parent or guardian throw away old medicines where they can't be reached by younger children or pets.



## Using Over-the-Counter Medicines Safely

### MEASURE LIQUID MEDICINES CORRECTLY TO GET THE RIGHT AMOUNT.

- Use the measuring spoon, cup, or syringe that comes with your medicine. It will give the most exact dose.
- If your medicine doesn't come with a special measuring device, ask for one at the pharmacy.
- Spoons made for eating and cooking may hold the wrong amount of medicine.
- Check the markings on your measuring tool to make sure it can measure the right dose.
- Most liquid medicines are measured in teaspoons (tsp) and milliliters (mL).



**5 mL = 1 teaspoon (tsp)**

**15 mL = 3 teaspoons = 1 tablespoon (TBSP)**

**30 mL = 1 fluid ounce (oz.)**

# Correct and Incorrect Ways to Measure Your Medicine Dose

To get an exact measurement of medicine it is important to only use either the dosing device that is provided with the medicine or a proper dosing device that is designed for medicine.

## Examples of Proper Medicine Dosing Devices



Dosage Cup



Dosage Syringe



Dosage Spoon

## DO NOT USE THESE SPOONS AS A MEDICINE DOSAGE DEVICE.



Plastic Spoons



Flatware Spoons



Measuring Spoons

## FACT

Household spoons come in various shapes and sizes, which means they hold different amounts of liquid.

The *Drug Facts* label tells you how much medicine you should take based on your weight and/or age.



This is the Information That the Scouts Should Have Learned from Lesson 2 - Using Over-the-Counter Medicines Safely

- ❖ Learn 12 tips for using over-the-counter medicines safely.
- ❖ How to measure liquid medicine correctly.



### About NCPIE

Organized in 1982, the National Council on Patient Information and Education (NCPIE) is a nonprofit coalition of diverse organizations committed to promoting the wise use of medicines for better health through trusted communication. NCPIE works to address critical safe medicine use issues such as adherence improvement, prescription drug abuse prevention, reduction of medication errors, and quality improvements in health care provider-patient communication. For more information, visit [www.BeMedWise.org](http://www.BeMedWise.org)



**Prepared. For Life.®**

### About the Boy Scouts of America

The Boy Scouts of America provides the nation's foremost youth program of character development and values-based leadership training, which helps young people be "Prepared. For Life." The Scouting organization is composed of 2.6 million youth members between the ages of 7 and 21 and more than a million volunteers in local councils throughout the United States and its territories. For more information on the Boy Scouts of America, please visit [www.scouting.org](http://www.scouting.org)



### About the SCOUTStrong Healthy Living Initiative

The SCOUTStrong® Healthy Living Initiative is a Boy Scouts of America initiative that integrates active lifestyles, healthy eating, and emotional fitness into everything that the BSA does through alliances, campaigns, and updated programs.



### About the SCOUTStrong Be MedWise Patch

In many other cultures, owls represent wisdom and knowledge because their night-time vigilance is associated with that of the studious scholar or wise elder. The owl in the Be MedWise patch is shown clutching a shield with a medicine pill on it. This is meant to represent the knowledge needed to make wise and safe choices in medicating with over-the-counter medicines.