

NOTE TO TEACHERS

Below is a sample administrator/principal notification letter that you may adapt to inform your administrator or principal of your desire to teach the **OTC Medicine Safety** program.

CUT OR FOLD HERE BEFORE REPRODUCING



Dear Administrator or Principal:

I wanted to make you aware of my interest in incorporating **OTC Medicine Safety**, a unit of study about over-the-counter (OTC) medicine safety, into my classroom curriculum. Designed specifically for 5th to 8th-grade students, **OTC Medicine Safety** offers important age-appropriate lessons with direct connections to health education, as well as science and English language arts standards.

OTC Medicine Safety offers valuable information my students will be able to apply to their daily lives in immediate, tangible ways. I'd be happy to meet with you and discuss any questions or concerns you may have surrounding incorporation of **OTC Medicine Safety** into our classroom studies.

Sincerely, _____

Why is this topic important for our students?

Research shows that young people begin to self-administer over-the-counter (OTC) and prescription (Rx) medication around age 11.¹ Unfortunately, kids often take on this responsibility with little knowledge about medicine safety. According to the American Association of Poison Control Centers (AAPCC), more than 85,000 children, ages 19 and under, require medical attention each year due to medicine mistakes or misuse.² As educators, we have the opportunity to reach students during this critical period as they begin to develop their self-care skills. This program will emphasize that students should *never* take medicine without the approval and supervision of a parent, caregiver, or other trusted adult.

Educator and Student Tested

OTC Medicine Safety was developed with input from 5th and 6th grade educators, and it was tested among students in the target age groups, too. Students completing the program showed a measurable increase in their knowledge and awareness of responsible use of OTC medicines. This leads to more positive health outcomes not only for the students reached, but for the family and friends they inform, as well.

Summary of Learning Outcomes

After participating in the **OTC Medicine Safety** program, students will be able to:

1. Identify the differences between prescription (Rx) and over-the-counter (OTC) medicines
2. Understand the importance of the *Drug Facts* label (included on every OTC medicine) and be able to identify its different sections
3. Recognize unsafe situations involving OTC medicines and brainstorm solutions using problem-solving skills
4. Understand safe storage locations for OTC medicines
5. Understand that using OTC medicines irresponsibly can cause harm

Learn more at:
www.ymiclassroom.com/otcmedsafety

1. Cheryl Abel, Kerri Johnson, Dustin Waller, Maha Abdalla, and Carroll-Ann W. Goldsmith. Nonprescription medication use and literacy among New Hampshire eighth graders. *Journal of the American Pharmacists Association*. 2012: 777-787.
2. American Association of Poison Control Centers' National Poison Data System. Data covers 2011-2021 annual average, ages 0-19.

