

# Chapter 3: Medicines

# Chapter 3: Medicines

## Teacher's Guide

### Learning Objectives:

- Students will understand the difference between over-the-counter medicines and prescription medicines
- Students will know how to find and understand six pieces of information on a prescription label
- Students will explain how to take medicines from reading the directions on the label
- Students will give examples of five important questions about their medicines to ask their doctor or pharmacist

### CASAS Competencies:

- 3.3.2.** Interpret medicine labels
- 3.3.3.** Identify the difference between prescription, over-the-counter, and generic medicines
- 3.4.1.** Interpret product label directions and safety warnings
- 3.1.3.** Identify and utilize appropriate health care services and facilities, including interacting with providers
- 4.9.3.** Identify sources of information and assistance, and access resources within a system
- 7.4.4.** Identify and utilize appropriate informational resources, including the Internet

## Section 1: Discussing & Reading About Medicines

### Suggestions for Discussing Theme Picture

1. Show theme picture to introduce topic.
  - “What do you see?”
  - “Where are they?”
  - “What are they doing?”
  - “Why?”
2. Ask questions to stimulate discussion.
  - “Why do people use medicines?”
  - “Why is it important to use medicines correctly?”
  - “What does a pharmacist do?”



Students need the skills to read and understand medicine labels. Key issues in this chapter are how to read medicine labels and talking with doctors and pharmacists about how to take medicines correctly. Students also need the vocabulary practice and the confidence to ask their doctor or pharmacist questions about their medicines.

## Suggestions for Teaching Key Vocabulary

Key vocabulary words are in bold throughout the text. Read each vocabulary word having students repeat them after you. Have students consider the meaning of each word. Have them look at the glossary at the back of their student book for definitions.

## Suggestions for Teaching the Health Content

- Before reading, discuss the pictures on the page.
- Have students take turns reading select paragraphs out loud.
- Discuss vocabulary. Have students use context clues to define key words.
- More advanced students may want to underline or highlight new information.
- Ask students about how medicines are used in their country. For example in some places they take antibiotics for everything, whereas in other countries they use herbal medicines and home remedies. This may elicit a discussion about different cultural beliefs and practices related to medicines.
- Asking students what they already know about medicines will help them integrate what they know about the topic with the new information they encounter.

## Issues to Address

- Explain that the word drugs and medicines are used interchangeably. Drug store and pharmacy are also used interchangeably.
- Demonstrate how different spoons are different sizes. A spoon from home may be more or less than “one teaspoon.” The most accurate way to measure liquids is with an oral medicine syringe. The syringe measures milliliters (ml), 5ml=1 teaspoon. A pharmacist will give these out for free, if asked.

### Key Vocabulary

medicines

drug

over-the-counter (OTC)

drugstore

pharmacy

prescription (Rx)

pharmacist

tablets

capsules

syrup

label

side effects

expiration date

patient

warning labels

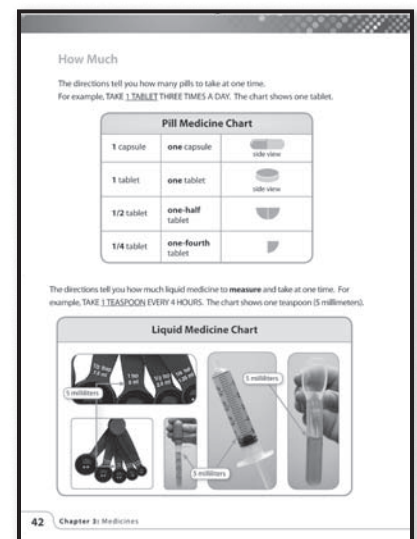
dose

refill

measure

interact with

generic drug

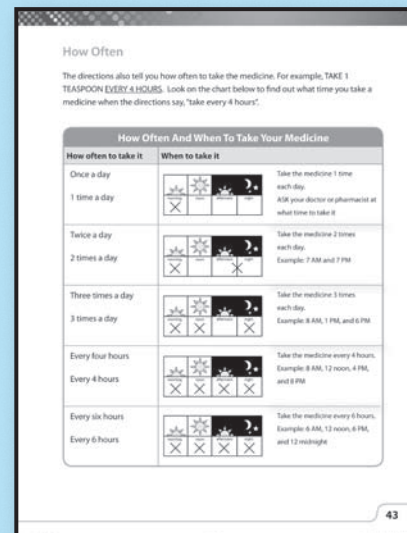


Student book page 42

- Show students how to read the dosage cups, those little plastic cups that come on top of children’s cold and cough medicines. It is very hard to read the 5ml=1 tsp mark on the side of the cup! Sometimes people do not even look for the writing but assume they should fill the whole cup.
- One common misunderstanding about medicines is that when the label says, “take one pill three times a day” people think they can take three pills in the morning and be done with it. Students need to understand the concept of time spacing and when to take the correct dose of medicine throughout the day.

- Warning labels often use very high level language, and use very tiny writing. Read some real ones in class and bring in a magnifier.
- Explain that generic brands are available for many medicines and are cheaper than brand name medicines. Show students examples of OTC medicines in brand name and generic versions. The generic brand medicines contain the same active ingredients as the well known brand medicines. Student can look at the ingredients listed on the label and compare.

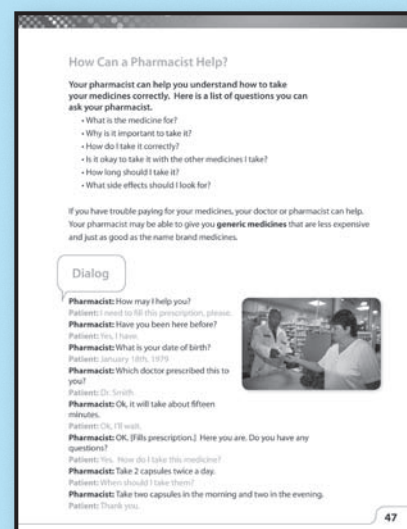
- Discuss how it is the pharmacist’s job to help customers understand how to take medicines the right way. Students need to be able to ask questions to make sure they understand their medicine.
- Pharmacists can help with OTC medicines as well as prescription medicines. Even though they are behind that counter, they will come out to the shelves, if asked. For example, they can help students find a good allergy medicine, the right kind of cough medicine for a child, or a generic (cheaper) brand of something you use.



Student book page 43



Student book page 44



Student book page 47

## Section 2: Activities

Pick and use as needed to develop skills.

### Pronunciation Activity: Tap the Stress (X = LOUD tap, x = softer tap)

#### Teaching Steps:

- 1. Tap or clap the rhythm of the group being studied.** Tap loudly for a big **X** and softly for a small **x**. For example, tap the rhythm **X x** like this: *TAP tap, TAP tap, TAP tap*. Once you have set the rhythm, have students join you in tapping the rhythm. Keep tapping without saying anything until everyone is tapping in unison:
- 2. Say each word in time to the tapping.** Have students continue the beat as they repeat each word in unison after you. Repeat each word until students' rhythm and pronunciation are acceptable. Do not drag, keep up the tempo.

X x
tablet
capsule
dosage
teaspoon
label
liquid
measure
warning
dropper

x X
avoid
begin
by mouth
syringe
at noon
at night
with food
correct
exact

x X x
a doctor
correctly
directions
exactly
important
inhalant
injection
prescription
the bottle

X x x
dangerous
dosages
medicine
pharmacist
pharmacy
side effects
tablespoon
vitamins
safety cap

x x X x
as directed
ask your doctor
diabetes
discontinue
expiration
for example
every evening
every morning
information
interactions

x x x X x
antibiotics
antidepressant
How are you feeling?
How can I learn more?
How may I help you?
I have a backache.
I have a headache.
I have a question.
I need a prescription.
over-the-counter



## Grammar Activity: How Much, How Many, How Often

This is an answer /questions activity. You state the answer and students give the appropriate question phrase.

Teacher: 7 tablets	Class/Individuals: How many?
Teacher: once a week	Class/Individuals: How often?
Teacher: \$4.15	Class/Individuals: How much?

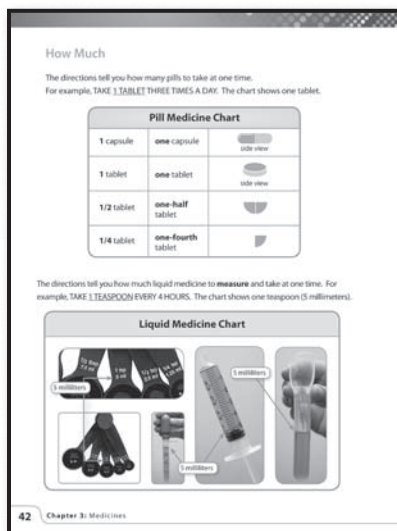


## Hands On Activity: Reading a Medicine Label

Have students bring in over-the-counter (OTC) medicines from their homes, or bring in examples yourself. Have students refer to page 39 in their student books to identify the different parts of a medicine label. Then have them work in pairs to find the same information on the OTC medicine bottles in class.



## Math Activity: Measuring Liquid Medicines



Student book page 42

Have students refer to page 42 in their student books for this activity.

Have students look at the 4 ways of measuring liquids. Ask questions about the various dosage tools' scales, such as:

- How many teaspoons can the oral syringe hold?
- How many milliliters can the oral syringe hold?
- How many teaspoons equal 10 milliliters?
- Fill the dropper and ask, "How much medicine is in the dropper?"
- How much medicine is in the medicine spoon?



## Math Activity: What is a Teaspoon?

Have students bring in teaspoons from home. A spoon that you eat with may be more or less than “one teaspoon.” The most accurate way to measure liquids is with an oral medicine syringe or dosage cup. The oral medicine syringe and dosing cup measures milliliters (ml) 5 ml = 1 teaspoon. Have students work in groups with an oral medicine syringe or dosage cup and fill their spoons with 5 ml of liquid to test how accurate they are. A pharmacist will give these out for free, if asked.



## Math Activity: Liquid Equivalencies

Have students study the table of liquid amounts and then write the correct number in each blank. See student worksheet at the end of this teaching unit.

3 teaspoons = 1 tablespoon

5 milliliters = 1 teaspoon

15 milliliters = 1 tablespoon

1.   3   teaspoons = 1 tablespoon
2. 15 milliliters is the same as   3   teaspoons
3. 5 milliliters =   1   teaspoon
4.  10  milliliters = 2 teaspoons



## Math Activity: Match the Words and Abbreviations

Have students draw a line from each word to its abbreviation. Some words may have more than 1 abbreviation. See student handout at the end of this teaching unit.

Words	Abbreviations
teaspoon	ml
tablespoon	TBS
pound	OZ
liter	l
milliliter	lb
ounce	L
	TSP
	tsp
	mL

## Internet Activity: Learning More About Medicines

If your facility has computers that are connected to the Internet, have students try some of the online activities. Have students work in pairs with more experienced computer users helping those with less experience. Students can refer to page 48 in their student book for a list of suggested websites.

### Web Tip: If a Link Doesn't Work - Backtrack

For example, if this link does not work:

<http://www.reepworld.org/englishpractice/health/medicine/index.htm>

Erase the end part and try this:

<http://www.reepworld.org/englishpractice/health/>

Once you get a link that works, search from there for the resource you want.

## Section 3: Dialog

### Suggestions for Teaching the Dialog

Help students read the dialog. Then have them practice the roles in pairs. To change the dialog, substitute other appropriate words for the underlined words. Finally, encourage chain drills and free conversations on the topic. The dialogs are listed by degree of difficulty. Beginning ESL students may only be able to do Dialog 1. But they will benefit from listening to classmates practice the others.

#### Dialog 1

**Doctor:** How often do you get a headache?

**Patient:** Almost every day.

**Doctor:** Do you take any medicine for it?

**Patient:** Some aspirin.

**Doctor:** Does the aspirin help you?

**Patient:** Yes.



## Dialog 2

**Pharmacist:** How may I help you?

**Patient:** I need to fill this prescription, please.

**Pharmacist:** OK. [Fills prescription.] Here you are.  
Do you have any questions?

**Patient: Yes.** How do I take this medicine?

**Pharmacist:** Take 2 capsules twice a day.

**Patient:** When should I take them?

**Pharmacist:** Take two capsules in the morning and two in the evening.

**Patient:** OK. Thank you.

## Dialog 3

**Doctor:** Here's your prescription. Take it to a pharmacy to have it filled.  
Do you have any questions?

**Patient: Yes.** How do I take the medicine?

**Doctor:** With water, before lunch every day.

**Patient:** Are there any side effects?

**Doctor:** It may upset your stomach for a few days. If that happens,  
call me.


**Patient:** OK. Thank you.

## Section 4: Check Your Learning

### Suggestions for Checking Learning

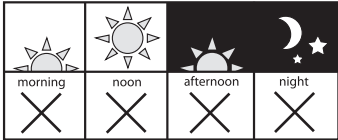
**Quiz:** Have students read the label and answer the questions. See student worksheet at the end of this teaching unit.

1. What kind of medicine is this?
  - OTC (over-the-counter)
  - prescription**
  - a home remedy
  - all of the above
2. How much medicine is the person to take?
  - 1 capsule**
  - 2 tablets
  - 3 teaspoons
  - 2 tablespoons

	<b>PHARMACY</b> STORE PHONE: (407) 555-1234 PROVIDER: JOHN SMITH *** 241-679	Warning: May cause dizziness- alcohol may intensify this effect.  Warning:  Discard after Apr 01, 2009  DRUG ID: THIS IS A RED CAPSULE IMPRINTED WITH THE NUMBER 15 ON ONE HALF
	<b>JANE DOE</b>	
	Rx # 22000187-00 Apr 07, 2008 Fill: (1 of 1)	
	<b>MELOXICAM TARTRATE 15 MG CAP</b>	
	QTY: 30 REFILLS REQUIRE AUTHORIZATION TAKE 1 CAPSULE BY MOUTH THREE TIMES A DAY	

3. How and when is the person to take the medicine?
- by mouth three times a day**
  - by mouth every evening
  - with a glass of water before a meal
  - once a day
4. What is the prescription number?
- 234567
  - 55370-0885-08
  - 22000187-00**
  - 431-8586
5. How many times can the person refill this medicine?
- one time
  - two times
  - six times
  - no times**

**Sharing with Others:** Having students share what they have learned with others helps them check and reinforce their learning. For example, have students go with a friend or relative to the pharmacy to help them ask the pharmacist questions. Or they can help a friend or relative develop a visual chart showing exactly how to take their medicine correctly. See EXAMPLE from page 43 in the student book.

How to Take Your Medicine Correctly		
How Often	When to take it	
Every six hours Every 6 hours		Take the medicine every 6 hours. <i>Example: 6 AM and 12 noon and 6 PM and 12 midnight</i>

## Section 5: Additional Resources

Visit these websites for more information on medicines.

### Information

#### **Use Medicine Safely**

<http://www.fda.gov/opacom/lowlit/medsafe.pdf>

#### **How to Give Medicine to Children**

[http://www.fda.gov/opacom/lowlit/medchld\\_brochure.pdf](http://www.fda.gov/opacom/lowlit/medchld_brochure.pdf)

#### **Safe Use of Medicines for Older Adults**

[http://www.niapublications.org/tipsheets/pdf/Safe\\_Use\\_of\\_Medicines.pdf](http://www.niapublications.org/tipsheets/pdf/Safe_Use_of_Medicines.pdf)

#### **Medicines and Older Adults**

<http://www.fda.gov/opacom/lowlit/medold.html>

#### **Your Medicine: Play It Safe.**

<http://www.ahrq.gov/consumer/safemeds/safemeds.htm>

#### **Herbal Products Plus Prescription Medications: Dangerous Combinations**

<http://www.poisoncentertampa.org/informational/herbs.html>

#### **Consumer Education: Ensuring Safe Use of Medicine**

[http://www.fda.gov/Cder/consumerinfo/ensuring\\_safe\\_use\\_all\\_resources.htm](http://www.fda.gov/Cder/consumerinfo/ensuring_safe_use_all_resources.htm)

#### **Medline Plus: Drugs, Supplements and Herbal Information**

<http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/druginformation.html>

### Activities

#### **LaRue Medical Literacy Exercises**

<http://www.mcedservices.com/medex/medex.htm>

#### **Taking Medicines Responsibly**

<http://www.tv411.org/lessons/cfm/learning.cfm?str=learning&num=12&act=1>

#### **REEP's English Practice Homepage**

<http://www.reepworld.org/englishpractice/index.htm>

#### **Medicine Vocabulary Practice**

<http://www.reepworld.org/englishpractice/health/medicine/index.htm>

### Free or Low Cost Services

#### **Florida Discount Drug Card (helps pay for prescription drugs)**

<http://www.floridadiscountdrugcard.com> or call 1-866-341-8894

As you work through the topic of medicines with your students, keep a list of other resources you find helpful.

Other Resources

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

# Section 6:

# Student Worksheets

# Student Worksheet: How to Use Medicines

## Liquid Equivalencies

Study the table of liquid amounts and then write the correct number in each blank.

3 teaspoons = 1 tablespoon
5 milliliters = 1 teaspoon
15 milliliters = 1 tablespoon

1. \_\_\_\_\_ teaspoons = 1 tablespoon
2. 15 milliliters is the same as \_\_\_\_\_ teaspoons
3. 5 milliliters = \_\_\_\_\_ teaspoon
4. \_\_\_\_\_ milliliters = 2 teaspoons

## Match the Words and Abbreviations

Draw a line from each word to its abbreviation. Some words may have more than 1 abbreviation.

Words	Abbreviations
teaspoon	ml
tablespoon	TBS
pound	OZ
liter	l
milliliter	lb
ounce	L
	TSP
	tsp
	mL

## Student Worksheet: Check Your Learning

Read the label and answer the questions.

**1. What kind of medicine is this?**

- OTC (over-the-counter)
- prescription
- a home remedy
- all of the above

**PHARMACY** STORE PHONE: (407) 555-1234  
PROVIDER: JOHN SMITH \*\*\* 241-679

**JANE DOE**

Rx # 22000187-00 Apr 07, 2008 Fill: (1 of 1)

**MELOXICAM TARTRATE 15 MG CAP**

**QTY: 30** REFILLS REQUIRE AUTHORIZATION  
TAKE 1 CAPSULE BY MOUTH  
THREE TIMES A DAY

Warning: May cause dizziness-  
alcohol may intensify this effect.

Warning:

Discard after Apr 01, 2009

DRUG ID: THIS IS A  
RED CAPSULE  
IMPRINTED WITH THE  
NUMBER 15 ON  
ONE HALF

**2. How much medicine is the person to take?**

- 1 capsule
- 2 tablets
- 3 teaspoons
- 2 tablespoons

**3. How and when is the person to take the medicine?**

- by mouth three times a day
- by mouth every evening
- with a glass of water before a meal
- once a day

**4. What is the prescription number?**

- 234567
- 55370-0885-08
- 22000187-00
- 431-8586

**5. How many times can the person refill this medicine?**

- one time
- two times
- six times
- no times

