

CHILD SAFETY BLOG

PATRICK MALONE & ASSOCIATES, P.C.
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Dosing directions in children's medications found wanting

Given the importance of correct dosing of over-the-counter pediatric medicines, you would think that the labeling on the package and the dosing information would be clear and understandable for parents. Unfortunately, a recent study published in the Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA) says that is usually not the case, with potentially deadly results.

The study examined the directions and measuring devices in 200 non-prescription pediatric liquid medicines for allergy, cough and cold, pain and gastrointestinal problems, as well as some combination medicines, over one year ending Nov. 1, 2009.

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The sample represented 99% of over-the-counter liquid pediatric medicines sold in the United States.

Researchers found that 52 medicines did not include a measuring device, and that 146 of the other 148 had inconsistencies between the dosing directions and the devices, including missing or superfluous markings, unfamiliar units of measurement (for example, drams or cubic centimeters), or undefined or nonstandard abbreviations. More than 24% of the medications that did include measuring devices had missing markings, while 120 had superfluous markings. Meanwhile, 11 of the 200 medications used little-known units of measurement, such as drams and cc, for doses listed.

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) published voluntary guidelines for labeling of dosing directions and measuring devices for over-the-counter liquid medicines in November 2009 and expects to see changes by next winter, according to the study's lead author, Dr. Shonna Yin. At that time, Yin says, the study will be redone to determine if the voluntary guidelines work.

Source: [The New York Times](#)

You can view the JAMA abstract [here](#).

Families interested in learning more about our firm's legal services, including legal representation for children who have suffered serious injuries in Washington, D.C., Maryland and Virginia due to medical malpractice, defective products, birth-related trauma or other injuries, may ask questions or send us information about a particular case by phone or email. There is no charge for contacting us regarding your inquiry. An attorney will respond within 24 hours.

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