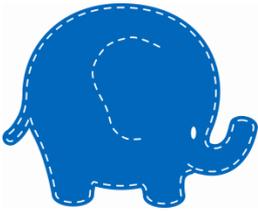


Department of Pharmacy

## Side effects from medicines

Information for children and young people aged  
nine years old and over



### Who is this leaflet for?

If you think you might have had a side effect from a medicine, this leaflet is for you. Sometimes children and young people are worried about side effects but they aren't sure what to do next, or don't know what questions to ask.

This leaflet gives some information about side effects, but its main purpose is to help you in talking with a doctor or nurse about any concerns you may have about side effects.

### What is a side effect?

Medicines are designed to help you but sometimes they can cause problems. For example, a medicine to stop a bad pain might make you feel sick or cause a headache. These unwanted problems are called side effects. You may also hear them called 'adverse drug reactions'.

Side effects can range from being common to very rare. They can also range from mild to severe. So, if you think you're having a side effect from your medicine, it's really important that you tell someone.



### Can I be sure if my medicine has caused a side effect?

Often it is impossible to be sure if a medicine is really causing a side effect so it may be best to seek advice from a doctor or nurse.

Many common problems (like stomach upsets or headaches) may actually have nothing to do with medicines.

For example, a person might be taking a medicine for a long time and then catch an upset stomach infection (e.g. the 'winter vomiting bug'). In this case it is most likely that the infection - not the medicine - is causing the upset stomach.

### What should I do about my medicine if I have a side effect?

Most medicines come with a leaflet describing the medicine, how to take it and possible side effects. It is important that you read this leaflet.

If you think that you have a side effect it's important to speak to your mum or dad or another responsible adult. They might want to discuss with a doctor or nurse about what to do next.

There may be different options to consider. For example, if the side effect is mild and your medicine is helping you, it might be a smaller dose (amount) of medicine, using a different medicine or stopping your medicine.

### What questions can I ask my doctor or nurse?

- Can I take my medicine again?
- How long will the side effects last?
- If I take my medicine again, will I have the same side effect?
- Will there be more side effects?
- Can I have a different medicine that doesn't give me side effects?
- What will happen if I don't take my medicine?

### Apart from my doctors and nurses, who else watches out for side effects?



The Medicines and Health Care products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) watches out for side effects.

Anyone can report a side effect to the MHRA either by going to their website <http://www.mhra.gov.uk/> or phoning them free on 0800 100 3352.

If you decide to report your side effect to the MHRA you might want to ask an adult for help.

### Who to contact for further details

If you have any questions about your medication whilst you are in hospital, please do not hesitate to ask one of the Pharmacy team, alternatively you can telephone us on 0151 252 5311.

For more information about side effects, please see the information leaflet that came with your medicine. If you did not get a leaflet, please ask a doctor or nurse for one, or visit the website <http://www.medicinesforchildren.org.uk/>

This leaflet was developed as part of the ADRIC (Adverse Drug Reactions in Children) Programme which was funded by the National Institute for Health Research.

**Parents and carers.** This leaflet only gives general information. You must always discuss the individual treatment of your child with the appropriate member of staff. Do not rely on this leaflet alone for information about your child's treatment.

This information can be made available in other languages and formats if requested.

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L12 2AP  
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[www.alderhey.nhs.uk](http://www.alderhey.nhs.uk)