

More than **60,000** young children end up in emergency departments every year because they got into medicine while their parent or caregiver was not looking. In Missoula County 11% of Missoula youth reported using in their lifetime a prescription narcotic that was not prescribed to them by their doctor.

How to keep your child safe:

1. Pick a place your children cannot reach

Any kind of medicine or vitamin can cause harm if taken in the wrong way, even medicine you can buy without a prescription. Walk around your house and find a storage place too high for a child to reach or see.

2. Put medicines away every time

Never leave them out on a kitchen counter or at a sick child's bedside, even if you have to give the medicine again in a few hours. Always put every medicine and vitamin away *every* time you use it, including those you use every day.

3. Make sure the safety cap is locked

Always relock the safety cap on a medicine bottle. If the medicine has a locking cap that turns, twist it until you hear the click or you cannot twist anymore. Remember, even though many medications and vitamins have safety caps, children may be able to open them. Always store every medicine and vitamins' up and away and out of children's sight.

4. Teach your children about medicine safety

Tell your children what medicine is and why you must be the one to give it to them. Never tell children medicine is candy to get them to take it, even if your child does not like to take his or her medicine.

5. Dispose properly

One way to keep your children safe is to dispose properly of unused or unneeded medicine or prescriptions.

- Bring your pill medicine to the 24 -hour drop box at the Missoula Police Department. No questions asked just drop them off in the box.
- It is best to not flush medicines as they can affect our water supplies.



Missoula Forum for Children & Youth

www.missoulaforum.org

