

**Guide to  
Over the Counter  
Medications  
2014**



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# Health and Wellness



**Mental:** Challenging yourself mentally and intellectually, setting attainable goals for yourself, and staying positive.

**Spiritual:** Personally choosing to live by a certain set of values and following them.

**Physical:** Taking care of your body by eating a healthy diet, adequately exercising and sleeping, and drinking plenty of water.

**Social:** Maintaining a social circle of friends and family that equally acts as a support group.

**Environmental:** Choose to live in a healthy environment, one that you enjoy being in.

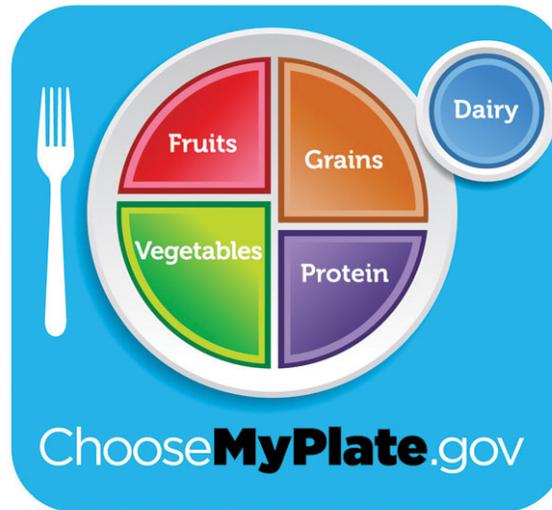
**Emotional:** Acknowledge your emotions and feelings in order to better cope.

**To maintain your ideal healthy self, it is important to attend to every one of these aspects of health for a complete health.**

# Prevention

## Nutrition

According to the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), half of your plate during each meal should consist of fruits and vegetables, and the other half should consist of grains and protein. USDA recommends all or most of your grains should be whole grains instead of refined grains such as white bread. Dairy should be the smallest portion of your plate.



## Vitamins

If eating as recommended above in the nutrition sections, you should be able to maintain plenty of vitamins necessary in your diet. If you are lacking in a particular vitamin, you may buy a bottle of vitamins over the counter in order to maintain ideal health.

## General Hygiene

Maintaining good hygiene can help to prevent in transmission of diseases and germs. To maintain general hygiene, wash hands with soap thoroughly after using the restroom and prior to preparing food. Shower frequently to maintain a clean body. Wear fresh, clean clothing to reduce infection and bacteria.

# When to See a Doctor

- Fever greater than 102.5°F (39°C)
- Vomiting or diarrhea lasts more than one day
- Pain does not improve in two days
- Headache persists more than one day
- Stomach pain persists for more than one week
- Severe dental pain
- Bleeding does not cease
- When over the counter medications do not improve your condition

**It is important that you visit an urgent care center instead of the emergency room. It is less expensive!**

**When your child is experiencing these same symptoms, it is very important to take your child to the health care provider immediately!**

# When to Go to the Emergency Room

- **Difficulty breathing**
- **Confusion**
- **Severe Pain**
- **Severe Wounds**
- **Pain in Chest**



# How to Read this Book

**Each symptom page will have the same basic layout: Ailment, symptoms, available medications listed by active ingredient, instructions for use, alternative treatment options, and warnings will be listed in red.**

**Ailment:** The main symptom or problem you are having. This will be the title of the page.

**Symptoms:** Symptoms will list all and other symptoms you may be experiencing in order to self-diagnose if possible.

**Medications for Use:** Here, the available medications over the counter will be listed by active ingredient. This is also the word you should look for on generic bottles of medication.

**Instructions for Use:** Here we will direct you how to use the medication. However, if you can read the package, follow those instructions listed on the package or the instructions of your health care provider first!

**Warnings in Red:** Any known warning will be listed in **RED**. Follow the warning signs accordingly! Warnings are also included on the package

**Alternative Treatments for Ailments:** Alternative treatments direct one on how to treat yourself without using a medication.

**This booklet is by no means an exhaustive list of medications or equivalent to a visit to your health care provider. If you are unsure of your ailment, you must see your health care provider!**

# How to Read your Medication Packages

There are five highlighted items in the picture below. Each designates an important word to look for that is **always** included on all medicine bottles and packages: the brand name, the active ingredient, the amount of tablets or liquid in the package, the strength of the tablet or liquid and a designation for users.

**Brand Name:** Tylenol

**Active Ingredient:** Acetaminophen

**Designation:** For Adults

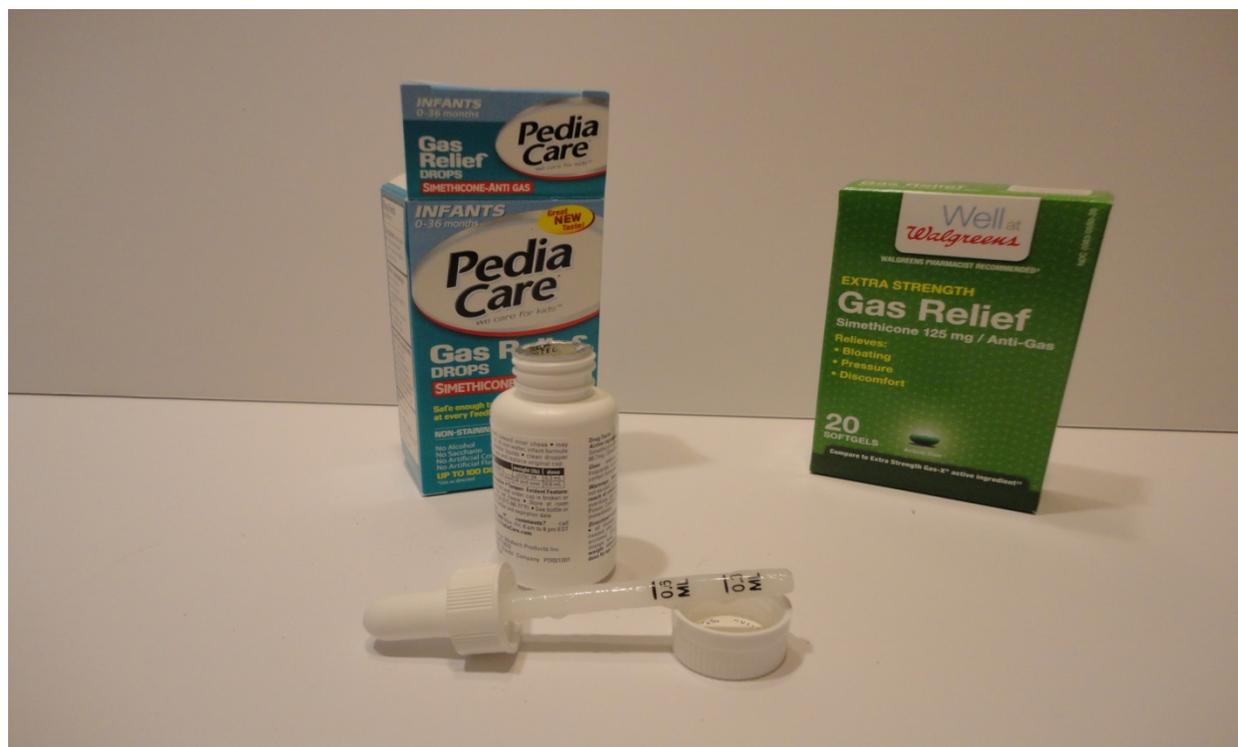
**Strength of Medicine:** 500mg per caplet

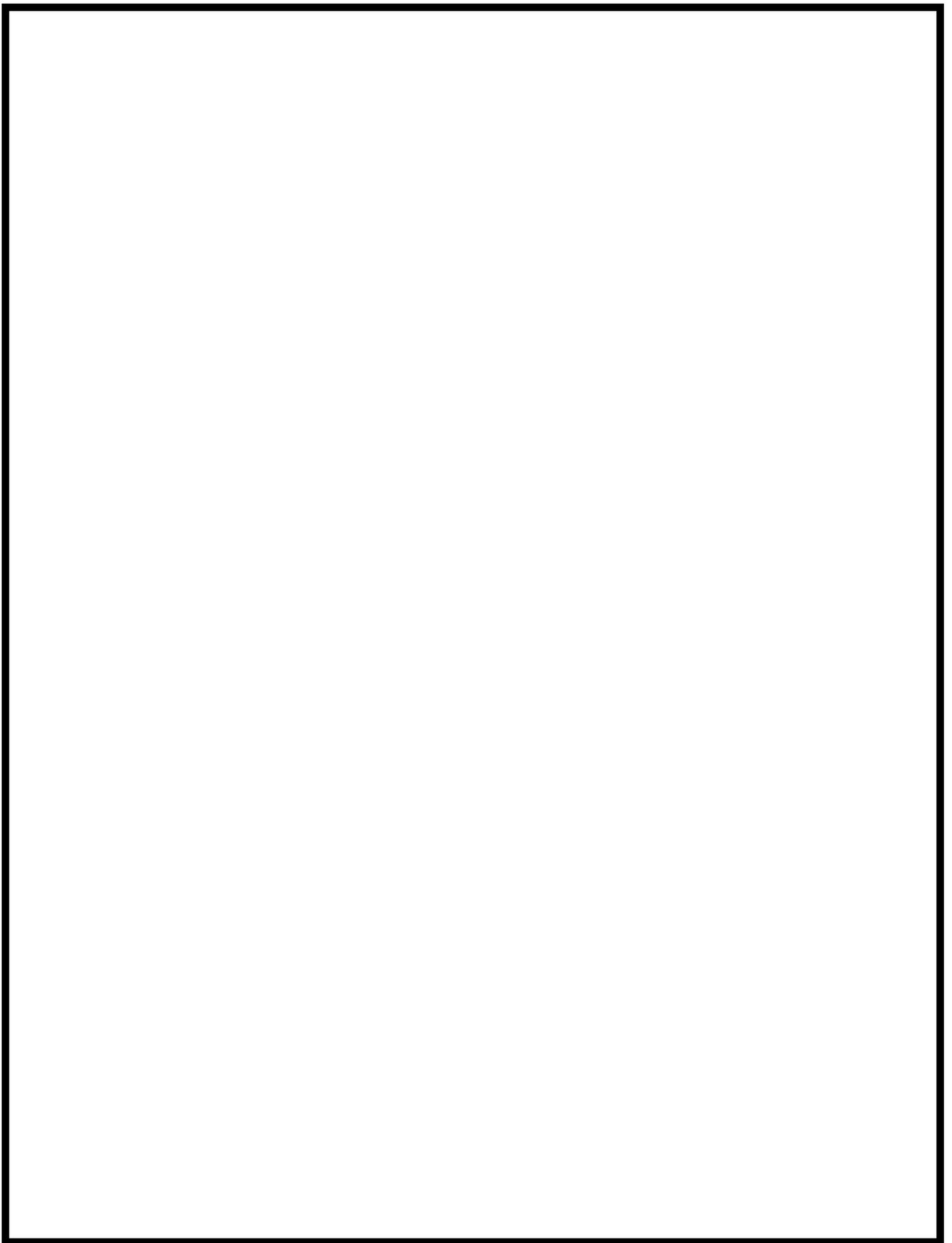
**Amount in Package:** 100 Caplets



# Brand Name Versus Generic Medications

For all brand name, over the counter medications, there is a generic equivalent. The generic equivalent is always located right next to the brand name medication on the supermarket or pharmacy shelf. The generic equivalent is always cheaper! To ensure you are buying the correct medication, make sure the active ingredients are the same. In the photo below there are two packages of Gas Relief Drops for children. The active ingredient is Simethicone with a strength of 125mg. If you look closely you can see the word simethicone on each package as well as the same strength. Many people believe that brand names are better, however, that is not the case. Generic medications are exactly the same as brand name medications with the only difference being the price! Save yourself some money and buy generic!





# Pain or Fever

## Symptoms

Headache, Arthritis pain, Fever, Muscle pain, Back pain etc.

## Medications for Treatment

**Acetaminophen:** Used for pain or fever

**Ibuprofen:** Used for pain and swelling

## Instruction for Use

Take one or two tablets for pain or fever.

Take every six hours if pain or fever persists.

## Warning

**Taking more than the recommended amount can damage kidneys, liver or stomach!**



## Alternative Treatments

### For Headache:

- Sit in dark and quiet room
- Lay a cool cloth over eyes
- Lie down with head elevated
- Increase Water Intake

### Pain:

- Ice pack 24 hours after injury
- After, alternate ice pack with warm pack
- Elevate
- Rest injured area

# Heartburn, Gastritis, Reflux

## Symptoms

**Heartburn:** A burning pain or discomfort that may move from your stomach to your abdomen or chest, or even up to your throat

**Regurgitation:** A sour or bitter-tasting acid backing up into your throat or mouth

## Medications for Treatment

**Antacid/Calcium Supplement:** Chewable tablet that reduces heartburn or reflux for short-term relief

**Famotidine, Lansoprazole, Omeprazole and Ranitidine:** Used for persistent acid reflux, gastritis, or to treat ulcers for long-term relief



## Alternative Treatments:

- Avoid foods you think may be contributing to the reflux.
- Sleep with head elevated

## Instructions for Use

Take one tablet 1 hour after eating. Use chewable antacids if this does not occur often. Use medications such as Famotidine or Omeprazole for frequent occurrences of reflux.



## Notify your doctor if....

You have been using these medications to treat reflux every day for two weeks. You may also request a prescription for this medication to reduce the cost due to insurance coverage.

# Constipation

## Symptoms

Infrequent bowel movements and/or difficulty having bowel movements

Pain or swelling of the abdomen

## Medications for Treatment

**Fiber Supplement:** Powder mixture added to water to relieve constipation

**Milk of Magnesia:** Chewable tablet or liquid form for quicker relief of constipation



Use a fiber powder that is mixed with a glass of water. Drink the entire glass after mixing. For quicker relief, may use liquid milk of magnesia. Use measuring cup for correct dose. Usually works within several hours.

## Instructions for Use

### Alternative Treatments

- Increase water intake to at least 8 large glasses of water per day
- Eat more fresh fruit and vegetables, eat whole grain bread instead of white bread.
- Avoid foods likely to cause constipation such as cheese.
- Exercise daily



# Seasonal Allergies

## Symptoms

Sinus pressure, sneezing, watery eyes, dry and itchy throat, coughing

## Medications for Treatment

**Antihistamines:** Pill or drop formula that reduces allergy symptoms by blocking histamines.

**Decongestants:** Pill taken by mouth to relieve congestion or stuffiness sometimes taken in addition to antihistamines



## Instructions for Use

Take one pill daily for allergy relief. Ask your pharmacist for instruction of which medications you should use.

## Warning!

**If you have high blood pressure, ask your health care provider before taking allergy medications!**

## Alternative Treatment

- See if you can identify what is making your symptoms worse
- Sometimes allergy symptoms can arise from animals or mold

# Diarrhea and Vomiting

## Symptoms

**Diarrhea:** abdominal cramps, loose, thin and watery stool

**Vomiting:** nausea and vomiting several times

## Medications for Use

**Loperamide:** Pill taken for treatment of multiple types of diarrhea

**Kaopectate:** Liquid or pill taken for diarrhea and works by slowing the gut

**Peptobismol:** Liquid or pill taken for relief of nausea, heartburn, indigestion, upset stomach and diarrhea



## Alternative Treatment

- Vomiting normally ceases after 12 hours
- Drink plenty of liquids to stave dehydration
- Fruits and vegetables may worsen nausea
- Eat soda crackers or soups that do not contain milk

## Warning!

**Do not take these medications without speaking to your health care provider if you are pregnant**

**If your child is vomiting, do not wait, take them to your provider immediately!**

# Hemorrhoids

## Symptoms

Hemorrhoids are enlarged blood vessels that are present inside or outside the anal area. When straining during a bowel movement, these vessels become large and painful; sometimes bleeding may occur.

## Medications for Use

**Preparation H:** temporarily shrinks swollen hemorrhoidal tissue, relieves discomfort and provides protecting layer



## Instructions for Use

Apply to affected area as directed per package. If problem persists, see your doctor.

## Alternative Treatment

- Do not strain your body during bowel movements
- Eat foods that keep stool soft such as fresh fruits and vegetables and plenty of fiber.
- Drink plenty of water to keep stool soft.

# Lack of Sleep

## Symptoms

Sleep deprivation has many symptoms including excessive daytime sleepiness, inability to concentrate, decreased energy, confusion, etc.

## Medications for Use

**Melatonin:** Over the counter hormone that can help in aiding sleep located in the vitamins section

**Doxylamine:** Over the counter medication that can help in aiding sleep

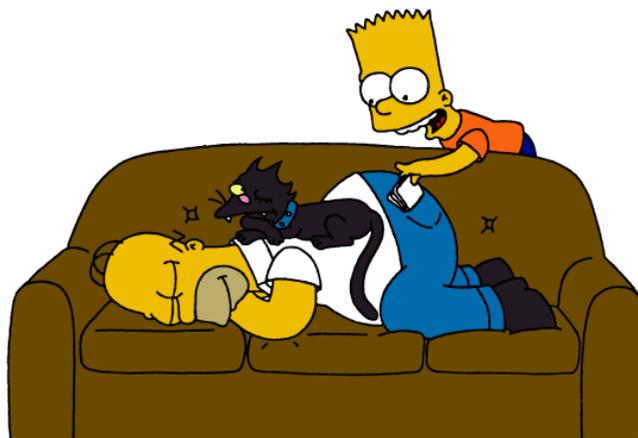
**Diphenhydramine:** Over the counter antihistamine that causes drowsiness and is often prescribed as a sleep aide.

## Instructions

Take one pill as directed per package before bedtime.

## Alternative Treatments

- Performing stress relieving activities before bedtime such as breathing exercises
- Allot yourself time to have eight hours of sleep



# Common Cold

## Symptoms

Runny or stuffy nose, sore or itchy throat, cough, congestion, slight body aches, sneezing, watery eyes, mild fever

## Medications for Use

**Acetaminophen:** Use for pain or fever such as sore throat or body aches

**Dextromethorphan:** Normally in liquid form used to suppress cough. Only use when coughing is interfering with sleep.

**Throat Lozenges:** Otherwise known as cough drops to soothe dry throat as needed.

## Instructions for Use

Medications for the common cold should only be used when necessary such as for fever or sleep interference.

## Additional Treatment

- Make sure to have plenty of rest
- Drink lots of fluids like juice and water
- Maintain a healthy diet
- Gargle warm salt water (2.5g salt in 240mL of water)

# Cleaning Skin Wounds

**Cleaning skin wounds thoroughly reduces the risk of infection and promotes healing. To properly clean a wound follow instructions below:**

- Wash your hands well with soap and clean water
- Rinse the wound under clean water for at least 5 minutes
- Make sure all dirt has been removed
- Wash wound with mild soap
- If dirt or debris remains, repeat wash and rinse
- If wound begins to bleed, maintain pressure on the wound until bleeding ceases
- Apply antibiotic cream to wound and bandage the area

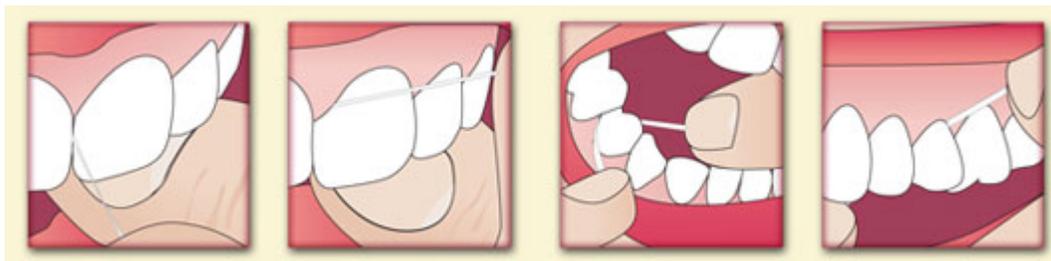
## **When to see a health care provider:**

- When the wound is larger than 6.5mm deep
- When the wound is longer than 20mm
- Wounds that are too painful to clean
- Deep wounds that reach fat, muscle or bone
- Wounds that do not stop bleeding after 15 minutes of holding pressure

# Oral Hygiene



- Brush teeth twice daily once in the morning and once at night. Floss twice daily, once in the morning and once at night.
- Use toothpaste when brushing, any type is acceptable.
- Floss to remove food or excess particles from between teeth. Perform at least once per day. May use floss or flossing device.
- Mouthwash can be used to reduce bacteria. Swish in mouth and spit out. This also helps to freshen breath.
- Reduce snacking and sugary food and drink to maintain healthy oral hygiene.



# Medications For Children



- Medication given to children must be checked to make sure it is safe.
- Medications are specifically packaged for children and have the correct dosing instructions on the box.
- Do not use adult medication for children!**
- Never give a child aspirin if they are under the age of 18.
- If a medication comes with a measuring cup, dropper or syringe, use that to measure the correct dose.
- Have a friend double check the dose to be sure.
- If your child continues to have a fever greater than 102.5°F (39°C) for more than 24 hours, call or go see your health care provider.**
- If your child has taken more medication than is safe, or you are unsure how much was taken, call Poison Control immediately at 1-800-222-1222 or call 911 for an ambulance.**

# Children's Medications



## **Places to Buy Medicine**

**Aldi**

**CVS Pharmacy**

**Dollar Store**

**Dollar Tree**

**Kroger**

**Rite-Aid**

**Wal-Mart**

**Walgreens**