

**The Be MedWise Prescription  
For Taking Over-the-Counter Medicines With Care**

Richard H. Carmona, M.D., M.P.H.  
Surgeon General of the United States

When selecting an over-the-counter (nonprescription) medicine, always read the instructions and warnings on the product label. If you want more information, talk to your pharmacist or doctor.

Some questions to ask:

- ✓ **What over-the-counter (OTC) medicines are available for the symptoms I want to treat?**
- ✓ **How much of this OTC medicine should I take at a time?**
- ✓ **How often should I take this OTC medicine?**
- ✓ **How many days in a row should I use this medicine to treat my symptoms?**
- ✓ **What other medicines (OTC and prescription), herbal products or dietary supplements should I avoid while taking this OTC medicine?**

Remember, OTC drugs are serious medicines that should be taken with care. That is why it is so important to **Be MedWise** when buying and taking OTC medicines.

*VADM Richard Carmona  
US Surgeon General*

“This may be the most important prescription I’ve ever written.”

—Richard Carmona, M.D., M.P.H.  
Surgeon General of the United States



If you take over-the-counter drugs, remember that these are strong medicines. Follow Dr. Carmona’s prescription: Before you use an over-the-counter medicine, read the directions on the label carefully. Then follow those directions exactly. If you have any questions, ask your pharmacist or other health care professional. Remember, always Be MedWise.



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