

What questions can I ask?

YOU CAN ASK ANYTHING YOU LIKE!

Here are some questions you may want to ask:

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

What should I do if I think I've had a side effect?

If you think you have had a side effect it is really important that you tell others how you are feeling. Some side effects go away quickly but some stay, and some can be serious. You should talk to your mum or dad, or another grown up that you trust. If you are at school you could talk to a teacher.

Like Tom and Lily you may want to talk to your doctor or nurse about what to do next. They will listen to your problems and work out what's best for you. It might be best to keep taking the medicine like Lily, or it might be best to try another medicine like Tom.

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.

Talking about problems with medicines

Information leaflet about side effects for children aged 5-8 years

Alder Hey Children's

NHS

NHS Foundation Trust

Medicines usually help people get better. Many people take medicines without any problems. But sometimes medicines can make you feel poorly. When this happens it is called a side effect. If you think you have had a side effect it's really important that you tell others how you are feeling.

What is a side effect?

Tom's Story

Tom had an operation on his tummy. Dr Wood gave Tom some medicine to stop his tummy hurting. The medicine worked and Tom's tummy didn't hurt. But a bit later, Tom started feeling very itchy. He couldn't stop scratching! Dr Wood said that the medicine was good at stopping pains but it made some people itchy. This is a side effect of the medicine. Tom's itching was so bad that Dr Wood stopped the medicine and gave Tom a new medicine. After that Tom felt much better. He didn't feel itchy anymore and his tummy didn't hurt.

Is it easy to spot a side effect?

Medicines can cause different side effects in different people. Some side effects are bad and some are mild. Knowing if a side effect has really happened (or not) can be hard. Lily was taking a medicine and started to feel worse. Her mum wasn't sure if it was a side effect so she asked Lily's doctor.

Who is this leaflet for?

Are you worried that a medicine is making you feel worse? It might be a side effect. This leaflet is for children to read with a parent or grown up. The leaflet is to help you talk with a doctor or nurse about any worries that you have about medicines.

Lily's Story

Lily's ear was hurting. She went with her mum to see the doctor. Dr Jones said that a germ was making Lily's ear ache. She gave Lily some medicine to make the germ go away go away. Dr Jones said the medicine would take a few days to work. Lily didn't mind taking the medicine - it was yellow and tasted a like banana!

The next day Lily had earache and a headache too! Lily's mum thought the headache might be a side effect of the medicine so Lily and her mum went back to see Dr Jones. Dr Jones told Lily that it was very rare for this medicine to give people headaches. She said, "The same germ that is making your ear ache is also making your head ache. The medicine will soon make both aches go away." Lily and her mum agreed that she should keep taking the banana medicine. When Lily woke up the next day she felt much better. Her earache and headache had both gone away!

2. 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 others how you're feeling.

6. 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 your parent for help.

7. Where can I find out more information?

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/>

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NHS

Talking about

side effects from medicines

Information leaflet for children and young people aged 9 and over

Alder Hey Children's

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1. 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.

3. 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.

4. What should I do about my medicine if I have had 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 best to keep taking the medicine. If the side effect is severe, your doctor may talk to you about taking a smaller dose (amount) of medicine, using a different medicine or stopping your medicine.

5. What questions can I ask my doctor or nurse?

You can ask anything you like! Just in case you can't think of any questions, we've written some below that you might want to ask

Can I take my medicine again?

If I take my medicine again, will I have the same side effect?

Can I have a different medicine that doesn't give me side effects?

What will happen if I don't take my medicine?

How long will the side effect last?

Will there be more side effects?