

Help Prevent Medication Incidents

A component of the Canadian Medication Incident Reporting and Prevention System (CMIRPS).

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It's Important to Speak Out!

SafeMedicationUse.ca has received a report from a consumer who was given too much ibuprofen while in hospital. Ibuprofen is a drug that is used to treat pain and fever. Advil is a brand name for this drug. The consumer's doctor prescribed two tablets of Extra Strength Advil. Since each Extra Strength Advil contains 400 mg of ibuprofen, the consumer was supposed to receive 800 mg of ibuprofen. Instead, the nurse brought six regular Advil tablets. Each regular Advil tablet contains 200 mg of ibuprofen. This means that the consumer was given 1200 mg of ibuprofen. The consumer questioned the dose but took the tablets anyway. Later, the consumer asked the doctor about the dose of ibuprofen. The doctor said that a mistake had been made. The consumer had received 400 mg more ibuprofen than the doctor had prescribed. The consumer had some stomach pain, but fortunately there was no lasting harm.

Speaking out when you have concerns about your health care is an important way to avoid being harmed by a mistake. But it isn't always easy to tell a healthcare professional that you think a mistake has been made. It can be even harder when you are in hospital, feeling sick and vulnerable. Here are some tips that may help you to speak out and avoid being harmed by a mistake with medicine.

- Learn as much as you can about your medical conditions and the medicines that you are taking.
- If you don't understand why you are receiving a medicine, or if you think a mistake has been made, tell a healthcare professional right away.
- Before you accept any medicine, be sure that it is intended for you and not for someone else. [Read more](http://www.safemedicationuse.ca/newsletter/newsletter_id.html) (http://www.safemedicationuse.ca/newsletter/newsletter_id.html)
- Don't be afraid to ask more questions if you are not satisfied with the first answer you receive. Repeat your concerns respectfully and clearly. Healthcare professionals should welcome your questions. They should be able to provide answers that address your concerns.
- If you are feeling too sick to keep track of things, try to have a family member or friend with you when you are receiving care.

If you want to learn more about this topic, go to the [Helpful Links](#). This section of our website has links to other useful websites. For example, we suggest that you watch a video called "[Learn...to be Safe](#)" (http://www.safetoask.ca/?page_id=265). This video is part of the "It's Safe to Ask" website of the Manitoba Institute for Patient Safety. The Ontario Hospital Association also has a useful brochure, called "[Your Health Care Be Involved](#)" (<http://www.oha.com/Services/PatientSafety/Your%20Health%20Care%20%20Be%20Involved%20%20Acute%20Sector/English%20Tri-Fold%20Pamphlet.pdf>).

And if you've ever experienced any kind of mistake with your medicine, please report it to [SafeMedicationUse.ca](http://www.safemedicationuse.ca). We can all learn from your reports!