



A MINUTE OF HEALTH WITH CDC
Infant Deaths Associated with Cough and Cold Medications – Two States, 2005

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This podcast is presented by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. CDC – safer, healthier people.

Winter is cold season and that probably means you have a supply of cold and cough medicines on hand. If you have a child under age two, reaching for these medicines is not a good idea. Cold medicines contain a number of ingredients, including decongestants, antihistamines, and cough suppressants. These ingredients can be dangerous if they reach too high a level in the body. During a two year period, CDC found that more than fifteen hundred children under the age of two were treated in emergency rooms for side effects or overdoses from cold and cough medicines. The CDC study found that cold medicine overdoses caused three infant deaths in 2005.

If your child is under two and has a cold, talk to your doctor before giving any medication. Many cold medicines contain similar ingredients, so giving more than one medicine can easily result in an overdose. Remember that medication is often unnecessary. Saline nose drops and a cool-mist humidifier can help ease congestion.

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