ASKING ABOUT MEDICINES

AS WE GROW UP

ASK ABOUT MEDICINES
LESSON PACK

A pack for teachers and health professionals to use to educate children and young people about the safe and effective use of medicines.

This pack has been produced by Ask About Medicines with the support of the Department of Health and the National Pharmacy Association.
ABOUT THIS PACK

The Ask About Medicines Lesson Pack is a fun and effective resource to help you equip children and young people to make well-informed choices about medicine-taking through asking questions about medicines.

The pack contains user-friendly lesson plans, materials and worksheets that can be used with young people of different ages (for 5-14 years old), covering Key Stages 1,2 and 3.

Designed to be used easily and successfully by teachers, youth workers and health professionals, it allows you to pick and choose from the materials and approaches that you feel best suit your audience.

If you are a teacher or have a lot of experience working with young people, you could use the contents of the pack or materials to supplement your own ideas on medicines-related lessons/sessions.

If you have less experience of speaking to groups of young people, the pack provides a step-by-step approach to planning and delivering a great lesson on medicines.

We’d particularly like to see health professionals from the community offer a lesson on medicines to schools in their area and deliver it in person. This pack should help you to do that easily and effectively.

The use of this pack does not have to be confined to the school environment. Think about where groups of young people meet in the community and be creative about how you can reach them with this information. Locations in the community could include Cubs and Brownies meetings, Scouts and Guides, sports clubs or youth groups.
CONTENTS

SETTING THE SCENE
Medicines and young people

THE BASICS
Who is this pack for?
What age groups do the lessons cover?
How have the materials been developed and tested?
What format should the lessons/sessions take?
Where does this topic fit into the National Curriculum?
How do I use this pack?

GETTING STARTED
Why suggest delivering a lesson/session on medicines?
If I’m not a teacher, how do I approach my local school?
What do I need to do to prepare the lesson?
How can I be sure that the session is pitched at the right level to engage the audience?
How will I know if the lesson was a success?
Recap: Step by Step instructions for preparing a lesson on medicines
Tips on running a lesson for:
• 5-7 year-olds (Key Stage 1)
• 8-11 year-olds (Key Stage 2)
• 11-14 year-olds (Key Stage 3)

APPENDICES:
A  Lesson Plan and Materials: Key Stage 1 (ages 5-7)
B  Lesson Plan and Materials: Key Stage 2 (ages 8-11)
C  Lesson Plan and Materials: Key Stage 3 (ages 11-14)
   (these activities and materials will be added shortly)
D  Template materials:
   - Letter of introduction to schools
   - School/teacher evaluation form
   - User evaluation form
E  My Medicines check-list

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS
Research has found that in any given week 20% of young people are taking medicines. In 2006, 37.6 million prescription items were dispensed in the community for children under 16 years old, an average of nearly 4 items per young person, at a total cost to the NHS of £353.8 million.

But a great many children and adolescents don’t take their medicines as prescribed. Studies suggest that adolescents are even less likely to adhere to treatment programmes than younger children. Sometimes it might have been better not to have prescribed the medicine at all but to have listened to the young person’s views. Children and young people are more likely to benefit from treatment – whether medicines or something else – if they understand what it is for and have had a say in deciding the right treatment for them. Asking questions about medicines helps children and young people to be involved in decisions about their use of medicines, and helps improve communication between health professionals and young patients.

Asking about medicines as we grow up is very important because the more young people know about their medicines, and any other treatment options available, the more they can start to safely take control of their health. A decision not to use a medicine can be a good decision if it is based on sound knowledge and understanding of all the pros and cons. It cannot be a good decision if it is based on hearsay, scare stories or unvoiced fears.

Children and young people need to know who they can turn to for help and support with their medicines, and the sort of questions they could ask. Asking questions of health professionals can be very daunting, even for adults, especially if you are not feeling well. Children need to be given an opportunity to practise formulating and asking questions from an early age so that they can prepare to take control of their own health.

Prescribed medicines receive only minimal attention in the National Curriculum, often as a small part of education about illegal drugs and their effects. This pack is designed to meet the need for more information on medicines to be taught in schools.
The Ask About Medicines Campaign

Ask About Medicines is the independent campaign to increase people's involvement in decisions about their use of medicines.

The Ask About Medicines mission is to achieve lasting change by working with partners to encourage better communication between people and their health professionals and change expectations so that asking questions about medicines becomes the norm.

Our campaign aims to enable people to ask the questions that will help them to make informed choices about medicine taking, including whether they want to take medicines at all.

Ask About Medicines is supported by a number of organisations including the National Pharmacy Association (NPA) and the Department of Health, who have helped to make this lesson pack possible. Overall, we receive a mix of public, private and voluntary sector funding. In addition to our annual Ask About Medicines Week in November, we keep the “Ask” message alive during the rest of the year through a range of other activities such as the Ask About Medicines Awards for Excellence and the Ask Grants.

You can find more information about the campaign at
www.askaboutmedicines.org
THE BASICS

Who is the pack for?

The pack is designed to be used by anyone who would like to deliver a lesson about medicines to children and young people – whether or not you are a teacher, and irrespective of your experience in speaking to groups of children and young people. This pack is for experts and beginners alike. Whatever your professional background, this pack will enable you to give a stimulating and valuable lesson on medicines, that will help your audience make better informed choices about medicine taking as they grow up.

So this pack can be used by:

- Teachers (including PSHE and PE teachers)
- Health professionals (including school nurses, community pharmacists and pharmacy technicians, community nurses and GPs)
- Youth workers
- Any other professionals who work with children and young people

What age groups do the lessons cover?

Lesson plans and materials have been developed for three different age groups, broadly covering Key Stages 1 to 3:

Key Stage 1: 5-7 year olds (although with minimal adaptation these materials would be suitable for nursery children)
Key Stage 2: 7-11 year olds
Key Stage 3: 11-14 year olds (again, these materials could be adapted for an older age group)

How have the materials been developed and tested?

The Ask About Medicines team has worked with an educational consultant to develop the materials. They have been reviewed by individuals and organisations with expertise in communicating with children and young people and technical expertise in providing medicines information, so you can be confident that the information is accurate and pitched at the right level.

Most important of all, the lessons and materials have been checked out by children and young people themselves. The Expert Patient Programme Young Trainers helped design the content and delivery of the sessions, and finished materials were road tested with children and young people in a school setting.

What format should the lessons/sessions take?

Most of the content has been developed within the framework of a traditional ‘lesson’ format and timings, but you have the opportunity to pick and choose which activities you would like to share with your audience. Activities could be adapted to be used in an assembly or larger group setting.

Many of the worksheets and activities can be completed at home, perhaps as homework – an excellent way to let parents hear the important message about asking questions about medicines.
Where does this topic fit into the National Curriculum?

The lesson plans and content have been developed very much with the National Curriculum in mind.

Key Stage 1
For these pupils the sessions fits in well with aspects of the National Curriculum for either Science or Personal, Social, Health (PSHE) & Citizenship Education:

PSHE – Unit 3
Developing a healthy, safer, lifestyle:
• How to make simple choices that improve their health and well-being;
• Some diseases can spread and be controlled;
• All household products, including medicines, can be harmful if not used properly.

Citizenship – Unit 2
Choices including information on:
• What kind of decisions do I make?
• How do I make decisions?
• What influences our choices?
• How do we make informed choices in our everyday lives?

Science - Unit 2a
Health and Growth - specifically looking at:
• Taking medicines
• Medicines and safety

Key Stage 2
Similarly, the information in this pack complements aspects of the Science, Personal, Social, Health (PSHE) & Citizenship Education and English curriculum:

Citizenship - Unit 2
Choices including information on:
• What kind of decisions do I make?
• How do I make decisions?
• What influences our choices?
• How do we make informed choices in our everyday lives?

Citizenship – Unit 7
Children's rights - human rights

PSHE - Unit 3a
Developing a healthy, safer, lifestyle:
• What makes a healthy lifestyle, including the benefits of exercise and healthy eating, what affects mental health, and how to make informed choices
• That bacteria and viruses can affect health and that following simple, safe routines can reduce their spread
• Which commonly available substances and drugs are legal and illegal, their effects and risks
• How to recognise the different risks in different situations and then decide how to behave responsibly, including sensible road use, and judging what kind of physical contact is acceptable or unacceptable

Science - Unit 5a
Keeping Healthy

Science – Unit 9
Drugs, tobacco, alcohol and health

Science – Unit 2
What makes people ill?
Key Stage 3
At this level the elements of the National Curriculum relevant to medicines are covered in Science, PSHCE and some aspects of History:

Science - Unit 9b
Fit and healthy including:

• What effects do drugs have?

Science investigative skills: Unit 2a
Use scientific knowledge and understanding to turn ideas into a form that can be investigated, and to decide on an appropriate approach

Scientific enquiry including:

• Evaluating conflicting evidence
• Pupils build on their scientific knowledge and understanding and make connections between different areas of science. Thinking about the positive and negative effects of scientific and technological developments on the environment and in other contexts, and taking account of others’ views and understanding why opinions may differ

History - Unit 20
Twentieth-century medicine: how has it changed the lives of people?

• Better health - longer life: why?
• Free at the point of delivery? – information on the National Health Service
• Is there a down-side to modern surgery and medicine?
• Health for all?
GETTING STARTED
Advice for health professionals and non-teachers

Using this pack gives you a great opportunity to visit local schools and communicate with children and young people about medicines. Schools and teachers will help you decide the best way to deliver the topic with their pupils.

Over the next few pages, we will give you advice on how to go about it.

For each age group there is additional help on how to pitch the information at the right level. There are full details of how to carry out the activities and use the worksheets in Appendices A-C.

So don’t be nervous – give it a try!

Why suggest delivering a lesson/session on medicines?

Schools enjoy welcoming experts to speak directly to their pupils on important life issues. The fire service often raises awareness of fire safety in the home and the local police teach children about stranger danger. Ambulance crews and opticians are among other professionals who visit schools. By sharing their specialist knowledge in a practical hands-on way, outside speakers can offer variety and interest to the school day.

As a local healthcare provider, you can use this opportunity to reach the service users of the future and help to give them a basis for making the most of the local healthcare services available to them.

Above all, the Ask About Medicines message is important for children and young people. Having the confidence to ask questions about medicines and understanding more about treatment options helps children and young people to be more involved in decisions about their health and to use medicines safely and effectively.
How do I approach my local school?

If you don’t already have a link with your local school, the first thing to do is make contact with the head teacher. Call them or write them a letter outlining what you would like to do. Explain the importance of educating young people about medicines and highlight how the sessions fit in with the National Curriculum (details on page 4).

You might like to adapt our template letter in Appendix D.

The head teacher may pass you on to a relevant colleague to make the necessary arrangements. They may suggest an assembly is the best format for the session or invite you to contribute to a lesson.

How do I prepare the lesson?

The first stage is to talk with the regular class teacher. Arrange to meet them or discuss the lesson over the phone. They will be able to explain to you the sort of activities the pupils usually enjoy. This will help you to select the materials and activities to use with them.

Find out the age of the pupils you will be talking to and how long you will have. Make sure you check if there are any children in the class with special needs that you should know about, and if so, discuss with the teacher how their needs can be accommodated in your lesson.

Once you have these details, look at the lesson plan for that particular age group. There are a number of suggestions for activities or materials you could use.

For pupils aged 5-7 years use Appendix A.
For pupils aged 8-11 years use Appendix B.
And for pupils aged 11-14 years use Appendix C.

Using the lesson plan, start to think about what you can realistically cover in the time you have been given. Our instructions for each activity in Appendices A-C include a time allocation to help you plan the lesson.

We have taken the needs of each age group into account in designing the lesson plans and activities, for example the variety and high levels of interaction needed to respond to the short attention span of younger children. Keep this in mind as you plan your lesson.
Next, prepare your materials:

- Think about any props you might like to take in. Taking a selection of different medicines (like inhalers, bottles, syringes) will interest your audience. **Always remember that safety is paramount and do not take any sharps or loose medications.**
- Print out (in colour if possible) any diagrams or drawings you want to use with the class
- Photocopy (or ask the school to photocopy) any worksheets you plan to use.

Practise how you might deliver the lesson and time how long you think each activity will take. Remember, if there is too much to fit into a lesson then a worksheet activity could be taken away as homework.

If you have any concerns about timings or activities, ask the school or department head if you can sit down with the class teacher in advance or send them your lesson plan and have a discussion about what will work best.

**How can I be sure that the session is pitched at the right level to engage the audience?**

The lesson plans and materials in this pack have been tested on children and young people and refined on the basis of their comments.

If you follow the lesson plans and prepare the session carefully you should have no trouble in ensuring that your audience concentrates, understands and enjoys the lesson on medicines.

The crucial thing is to keep your audience involved. Our lesson materials do exactly that with a mixture of group activities and individual worksheets.

Ask the regular class teacher what the pupils respond well to, and plan to include some of these activities in the session.

It is important not to use jargon or technical language when delivering your session. You should get a good idea of the level of the class and how to pitch the rest of your session by asking a few introductory questions like: “Who here can name a type of medicine?” Or “Who knows what this is?” (while holding up a syringe or inhaler).

If you feel that you need any assistance during the lesson ask the class teacher to chip in from time to time. They will most likely do this anyway but don’t be afraid to ask for their assistance. They are the experts, after all, when it comes to their class!

**How will I know if the lesson was a success?**

We are confident that your lesson will be a success and that most of the young people will find it fun, interesting and useful. But it is still handy to get feedback from the teacher who was overseeing the lesson. An evaluation form for the teacher/head teacher is found in Appendix D.

We would love to hear about your experience and receive feedback on how the session was received, including your views on this pack. Please complete the evaluation form found in Appendix D and return it to us by email to info@askaboutmedicines.org after your lesson.

We will post some of your comments onto the Ask About Medicines website – so share any tips or pieces of advice that would come in handy for other health professionals delivering a lesson on medicines. We’re sure they would appreciate it.

If you are asked back, you will know it went well!
Recap: Step by Step instructions to preparing a lesson on medicines

Step 1
Ask how long the lesson will last and talk to the class teacher about the sorts of activities the class enjoy as well as any special needs you should be aware of.

Step 2
Using the activities outlined in the suggested lesson plans, and thinking about the time you will have available, select at least 2 or 3 activities to prepare for the class.

Step 3
Discuss the activities and your suggested lesson with the class teacher.

Step 4
Prepare the materials you will need to run the activities you have selected and rehearse each activity.

Have a spare activity up your sleeve in case the children are less responsive than you expected or you rattle through the lesson quicker than you expected. You are unlikely to need it, but it will give you confidence to know that you have something in reserve if necessary.

Prepare a worksheet or materials that the pupils can take away for homework or put in their folders.

Step 5 – on the day…
Arrive early to set up your materials and familiarise yourself with the classroom.

Step 6
Make sure that you introduce yourself to the class and tell them your profession and where you work.

Start off by asking them if they know what you do in your profession. e.g. does anyone know what a pharmacist does?

Step 7
Carry out the activities you have prepared, aiming to keep to time; if something takes longer than you expected, reduce the scope of the next activity or cut something out rather than rushing to fit everything in.

Step 8 – after the lesson
Ask for feedback from the teacher and ask them to fill in the class evaluation form (Appendix D). If you feel it has gone particularly well you could ask for a quote to use if you want to approach another school.

Step 9
Think about other schools and places used by young people where you could give a similar session.
The main thing with pupils of this age is to keep them interested with visual props and by making sure they are involved in the lesson as much as possible. That means plenty of questions – stopping while you are explaining things to check they understand and ask if they have any experience of what you are talking about.

Try to pick up on their responses and adapt your activities to the things that they are interested in. If you have chosen to use the puppets with the children and they are responding well, then extend this part of the lesson and get them involved in using the puppets and role playing with you.

Children of this age tend to have an attention span of only a few minutes. It’s good to be prepared for this. You can keep their attention by making sure they are participating in the lesson – ask them questions, get them involved in the activities, even get them to stand up or sit down instead of putting up their hands.

Encourage them to share any personal & relevant experiences - young children usually have plenty to say. They may use the experiences of a sick pet when it comes to explaining illness or medicines, as this is something they can relate to.

If you are doing a lot of the talking, especially at the start of the lesson make sure you ‘sound’ interesting. That means making sure you change the pitch and tone of your voice or asking questions to the class. If you are using the puppets try to use funny and exciting voices for each of the characters!

Most important of all, keep the language and terminology you use really simple – you’ll lose them if you use technical terms!

Younger children may find it difficult to think up questions they would ask a health professional then and there. They are more used to answering questions they have been asked by the teacher. So if you find that they are unable to think up any questions they would like to ask you or the health professional puppet, then ask them some questions about medicines and they will most likely respond with their own answers. This is a different way to introduce them to the questions they could ask about medicines.

It is best to do the ‘talking’ bit of the lesson first – then to introduce the more individual activities like filling in worksheets. If it is a large class then maybe they can be split in half – with the teacher helping out with the worksheet activity for one group while you talk to the other, before swapping over half way through the lesson.
Tips on running a lesson for 7–11 year olds

Many of the rules for 5-7 year olds apply here as well.

The first step is to create a good level of interaction between you and the class. Get the pupils to talk about their experiences of medicines and get them to answer your questions before you offer more information. This will give you a good idea of the level of knowledge of the class and how much they understand about medicines.

Once the class is engaged, keep them there by continuing to ask them questions along the way.

By this age they should be fairly disciplined at putting their hands up before they answer or, as is the case in some schools where there is a no-hands-up policy, taking turns to answer questions.

If one part of the session is going well then stick with it. Equally, don’t be afraid to cut one part of the lesson short if you feel the class is not responding well to it, and go onto the next activity.
This section of the Pack contains the lesson plans and materials to support you in organising, delivering and evaluating a lesson on medicines.

Appendices A, B & C contain the lesson plans and materials for Key Stages 1, 2 and 3.

*The activities and materials for Key Stage 3 are being finalised. They should be available shortly.*

*Sign up for the Ask About Medicines e-bulletins (on our website) or check [www.askaboutmedicines.org for updates.](http://www.askaboutmedicines.org)*

Appendix D contains templates to support you in approaching local schools and evaluating the success of your lesson.

And Appendix E comprises the My Medicine sheet, a great resource for children to use whenever they receive a new medicine. It can be used by parents, carers or health professionals to fill in with children to help them understand more about the medicine they have been prescribed.
The aim of this session is to teach pupils:
• What medicines are; what they do; what they are for
• How you know you need a medicine
• What medicines are like / not like
• How medicines work
• The key things you need to know to use medicines safely

By the end of the session pupils should:
• Know how to use medicine safely
• Know who they can ask about medicines
• Understand why it’s important to ask about medicines
• Have an idea of the sort of questions to ask

Use the activities and detailed instructions on the following pages to help plan your lesson.
Activity 1 – Show & Ask

Time allocation: 10 minutes

This is where you can introduce the topic of medicines to the class by showing the pupils different medicines and finding out how much they know about them.

Preparation:
Find a selection of medicines you can take with you to show the pupils. Make sure your selection is safe – e.g. remove medicine from bottles (you can use dried beans or lentils to make pill bottles rattle convincingly, and juice or water to simulate liquids) and ensure that syringes don’t have sharp needles. Make sure the medicines you take show the variety of ways medicines are delivered: tablets, inhaler, drops, syrup, cream, emollient, syringe/diabetes pen etc.

If you prefer or if you don’t have access to medicines, print out the Show & Ask images (KS1a) in this pack to use as props.

Check the school medicines policy with the class teacher and make sure that your advice complements it.

Delivery:
Using the examples of medicines you brought with you or the Show & Ask images ask the class:
• Has anyone seen this sort of medicine before?
• Does anyone know what this is?
• What is it used for?
• When do people use this sort of medicine?
• Who knows what rules there are about using this sort of medicine safely?

Emphasise to the class how to use medicines safely. Ask for their suggestions, making sure you cover:
- Never use anyone else’s medicines
- Medicines are not sweets, and although their job is to help you get well they can do you harm if they aren’t used in the right way, so you must always ask an adult.
- Store medicines in a safe place away from young children
- If you need a medicine at school, your mum, dad or carer will tell the teacher and she will look after it for you.

Sum up by explaining that:
• There are lots of different types of medicines that are used for lots of different illnesses or conditions
• Medicines can be dangerous if they are not used in a safe way – so don’t use other people’s medicines, and if you are unsure ask an adult.
Activity 2: Health Professionals at Work:

Time allocation: 15 minutes

This activity will help pupils to understand the different roles of health professionals and how they all can provide information about medicines.

Preparation
Print out images of health professionals (KS1b).
Also, print out the images of health professionals and patients/medicine users (KS1c) and the Speech Bubble Questions (KS1d).

Ensure that there is one health professional print out and one or two speech bubble questions per pupil.

Delivery:
Using the health professional images show the class each picture in turn and, pointing at the health professional, ask them:
• Who is this person?
• What do they do?

Introduce the class to the Speech Bubble Questions and ask them which health professional they would go to with each question. Stick the speech bubble next to the medicine-user/patient with blu tak to illustrate them asking the question as an example.

Next, give each pupil their own picture of a health professional & medicine user to colour in. Provide a selection of the Speech Bubble Questions in the middle of the table so they can pick one or two questions the medicine-user should be asking the health professional and stick them onto a work sheet.

Sum up by explaining that:
• There are lots of different questions that you can ask about medicines
• You can ask your parents or carer about your medicines
• Doctors, pharmacists and nurses can help you understand about medicines if you ask them.
Activity 3: Circle Time

Time allocation: 20 minutes

This activity could be used to replace Activity 2 or as a way to complement the messages from the preceding activity.

Preparation
Use the outlines of health professionals, patients and parents (KS1e) to prepare puppets by cutting out the images, sticking them to card or laminating them and then mounting them on small sticks.

Prepare at least one health professional puppet, one child/medicine-user and one parent.

Delivery
Depending on numbers of pupils and the space available make sure the class sit in a circle – either on chairs or on the floor – which will give the pupils the feeling that they are going to have the opportunity to join in if they wish to.

Use the puppets you have prepared as actors with you providing the voices using the different scenarios outlined on the next few pages. You may choose to use the suggested scenarios or may feel confident enough to make up your own.

Introduce the puppets to the pupils - yourself, your parent, the doctor, nurse and pharmacist. Tell them that the puppets will show them some scenes involving yourselves and medicines. They will have a chance to use the characters themselves later & perhaps some of them will even want to take part themselves.

Younger children may be more used to answering questions than thinking up their own questions on the spot. When you get to Scenario 3 you may need to let the pupils play the role of the health professional (using the relevant puppet) and you could play the role of the child as a way of showing what sort of questions they could ask about their medicines.
Scenario 1 – Feeling Sick

Introducing the Activity

Say: Imagine this is one of you, with mum or dad, about to go in to see the doctor or nurse. You are feeling terrible - your arm is itchy and you can’t stop scratching.

This is you (hold up ‘child’ doll, puppet).

You are with mum or dad - (hold up ‘parent’ doll, puppet).

This is the doctor, the nurse and the pharmacist who you may see (Hold up relevant puppets)

Act out this scenario:

Parent: (concerned tone): It will be our turn next. How are you feeling now?

Child: (upset): It’s really itchy, all I want to do is scratch my arm to stop it from itching. But then it stings.

Ask the class:
Have you ever felt ill and had to visit the doctor? (lots of hands will go up).
Choose a small number of pupils randomly to ask what their illness felt like…. Listen to & comment on 2 or 3 responses

Move the scenario on by selecting / picking up the parent and doctor puppets

Scenario 2 – At the Doctor’s

Say: Now you are in the doctor’s surgery / room.

Doctor: Yes I can see that he has eczema (pronounced ex-ma) on his arm. Eczema is the name for patches of red, dry and itchy skin. I would like him to use this medicine, it is a cream. Make sure you put some on his arm 3 times a day. Make sure that he doesn’t keep scratching the area with the eczema.

Parent: Thank you doctor - I will make sure he uses his medicine.

Say: You watch and listen, then you go home and start using your cream.

Ask the class:
- How would that make you feel?
- It’s you they are talking about!
- Isn’t it you who needs to know all about the medicines you take?
Scenario 3 – Questions about Medicines

**Say:** Now you are going to learn how to find out about medicines you take for yourself by learning to ask questions for yourself.

[choose some questions from this scenario, or use them all, depending on your audience]

**Pupil:** What is this medicine called?

**Health professional:** This medicine is called hydrocortisone cream and it is a mild steroid cream. Don’t worry if these names are confusing. Medicines often have long and complicated names but I write it down on this piece of paper, called a prescription, which you give to the pharmacist or chemist and they will know what medicine to give you to take home.

**Pupil:** What does it do?

**Health professional:** This medicine will help your arm by making sure that the area does not get too red and itchy.

**Pupil:** Why do I need to take this medicine?

**Health professional:** This medicine helps itchy skin feel better. Your eczema can make you want to scratch like crazy. The cream can help control the itching so you won’t scratch as much.

**Pupil:** Who should look after my medicine?

**Health professional:** Some medicines need to be kept in the fridge or to be locked up. Some medicines need to be kept near you in case you need them quickly. At home your parents or carer should look after your medicine and keep it safe. When you are at school your teacher should look after your medicine.

**Pupil:** How do I take this medicine?

**Health professional:** There are instructions that come with the medicine to tell you how to take it. This medicine is a cream so you need to put a little bit of it (about the size of a pea!) on the area of your skin where you have eczema. Other medicines can come in pills, syrups, inhalers or syringes (Show class different types of medicines).

**Pupil:** When should I take this medicine?

**Health professional:** On the packet there are instructions for when you should take the medicine. This medicine needs to be taken three times a day. Once when you get up, then at lunchtime and before you go to bed.

**Pupil:** How long will I need to take this medicine for?

**Health professional:** The instructions on the packet will tell you how long to take the medicine for. You should use this cream for 7 days by which time your skin should be less itchy and painful. If it isn’t better come back and see me.
Scenario 4 – Taking Medicines for a Long Time

**Say:** Some people have to take medicines for a long time. Imagine if you had to take a medicine every day for a long time. How would that make you feel?

**Pupil:** Why do I have to take my medicine for so long? I have to take it every day now.

**Health Professional:** Some medicines need to be taken for a long period of time to control conditions like asthma or diabetes.

**Say:** Does anyone here know someone with asthma or diabetes?

**Pupil:** But why can’t I take it when I just feel ill?

**Health professional:** Some medicines need to be taken to prevent you from becoming ill. If you have a long term condition like asthma or diabetes, the medicine will help your body keep it under control. By taking the medicine every day it will help your body to manage your condition properly – even if you may need to use some other medicines from time to time as well.

**Pupil:** Is it hard to take medicines?

**Health professional:** Sometimes it can be hard to swallow a tablet or maybe the medicine doesn’t taste very nice when you take it. Sometimes you may need to brush your teeth after taking the medicine. Also, different medicines may need to be taken at different times. So, there can be a lot to remember. But don’t worry because you will receive instructions with every new medicine you need to take and you can always ask your pharmacist, nurse or doctor if you have any questions about your medicines.

**Pupil:** Could there be any side effects with my medicine?

**Health professional:** Side effects are when you feel ill or sick when you are taking a medicine – this doesn’t happen all the time but sometimes medicines can make you feel ill as well as helping you. You should tell your doctor or pharmacist if you are feeling ill from the medicine and they may be able to find a different one for you.

**Pupil:** Where can I get more information?

**Health professional:** There are lots of people you can ask for more information about your medicine. [If the school has a school nurse: Your school nurse or] a nurse at the doctor’s surgery, your doctor and your pharmacist can answer your questions.

If you have a long term condition like asthma or diabetes or epilepsy you can ask patient groups for information about your condition and medicines or find it on the internet. A patient group is an organisation of people with the same condition, like Asthma UK, Diabetes UK or the National Society for Epilepsy.
Scenario 5 – Questions to Ask

Pupil: So what sorts of questions can I ask when I am given a new medicine by my doctor?

Health professional: Some of the questions you could ask about a new medicine are:

• What is this medicine called?
• What does it do?
• Why do I need to take this medicine?
• Who should look after it?
• How do I take this medicine?
• When should I take this medicine?
• How long will I need to take it for?
• Could there be any side effects with this medicine?
• Where can I go for more information?

Ask the pupils if they have any questions about medicines that they would like to ask one of the health professional puppets. Answer their questions using the sample answers given above.

If the pupils are struggling to think of any questions themselves why not give them the health professional puppet and you pretend to be the child at the doctors/pharmacy by using the child puppet. You ask the questions about the medicines and the pupil holding the health professional puppet can give you their answer.

You can now invite some of the pupils to ask questions about medicines or even to act out the role of the health professional

Sum up by explaining that:

• If you are unsure about medicines ask questions
• You can ask your parents or carer about your medicines
• You can ask a doctor, nurse or pharmacist about medicines
Activity 4: Medicines Card Games
Time allocation: 15 minutes

The Medicines Cards (KS1f) can be used for a number of different games which the class can play in small groups.

Preparation
Print out the Medicines Cards images (KS1f) on card (normal paper may be too thin) and cut them out. Make sure that you have enough cards for the class, depending on the game you choose to play (see below).

Delivery:
Select from the games below:

Families – played in groups of 2-4.
• For a group of 4 pupils, print out at least 2 copies of each worksheet so that you have 12 x people, 12 x questions, 12 x locations and 12 x medicine cards. You need fewer cards for groups of 3 or 2 pupils.
• The cards are dealt out so that each child has 4 cards. The remaining cards are placed on a pile in the middle face-down.
• The aim is to collect a set of of cards that tell a story: a person, location, medicine and question
• Each pupil takes turns in picking up a new card to try and complete their story. If the card is not needed for their story (i.e. they already have a card of that type in that set) then it is discarded and the next pupil takes a turn.
• The winner is the first pupil to have a set of 4 cards which have a medicine, person, location and question.

Memory Game – played in groups of 2-4 pupils.
• Print out copies of at least 3 or 4 worksheets so that the pupils have at least 9 or 12 different pairs of images to search for.
• Two sets of cards are placed face-down and jumbled up.
• Pupils take turns to turn over two cards.
• When a matching pair is turned up the pupil keeps these and has another turn.
• If a pair is not uncovered then the two cards are turned back over and the next pupil has their turn.
• The winner is the pupil with the most pairs.
• To make it quicker/simpler – a pair could correspond to two similar images but not two identical images i.e. two people or two locations or two questions.

Snap – Played in pairs.
• You will need to select at least 4 worksheets of cards for this game and print two copies of each. That should give you a total of 48 individual cards to play snap with.
• Pupils each have a set of cards which they shuffle and place face down in a pile in front of them.
• Taking turns they turn over a card placing it in front of them starting a pile.
• If two cards appear that are the same, then the first child to shout “snap” gets to pick up all the cards (theirs and the other pupil’s).
• The winner is the person to have the most cards when the time limit is up.
Activity 5 – Colouring In Worksheets

Preparation:
Print out a selection of worksheets which the children can colour in and complete from KS1c.

Delivery:
These worksheets can be used during the lesson or as a take home sheet for homework.

Additional materials to take home

Consider printing off copies of the My Medicine checklist (M1) for pupils to take home and show their parents what they have learnt during the day.

The checklist is designed for parents to complete with their child whenever they receive a new medicine. As well as giving the child a chance to put what they have learnt into practice, it also shows the parent what sort of questions they could ask about medicines.

You can download the My Medicine checklist by visiting www.askaboutmedicines.org
LESSON PLAN AND MATERIALS

Key Stage 2
Ages: 7-11 years old

This session will teach pupils about:

• What medicines are, what they are like, what they do, what they are for, how they work
• How you know you need them
• How and where they should be stored
• How to use medicines safely – and what signs to look out for

By the end of the session pupils should:

• Have an awareness of the benefits and dangers of medicines
• Know how to use and store medicines safely
• Know who they can ask about medicines
• Understand why it’s important to ask about medicines
• Have an idea of the sort of questions to ask

Use the activities and detailed instructions on the next few pages to help plan your lesson.
Activity 1 – Show & Ask

Time allocation: 10 minutes

This is where you can introduce the topic of medicines to the class by showing the pupils different medicines and finding out how much they know about them, as well as introducing them to the idea that a range of different health professionals can help them.

Preparation:
Find a selection of medicines you can take with you to show the pupils. Make sure your selection is safe – e.g. remove medicine from bottles (you can use dried beans or lentils to make pill bottles rattle convincingly, and juice or water to simulate liquids) and ensure that syringes don’t have sharp needles. Make sure the medicines you take show the variety of ways medicines are delivered: tablets, inhaler, drops, syrup, cream, emollient, syringe/diabetes pen etc.

If you prefer, or do not have access to medicines, print out the Show & Ask images (KS1a) in this pack to use as props.

Print out some of the Show & Ask images of health professionals (KS1a).

Delivery:
Using the examples of medicines you brought with you or the Show & Ask images ask the class:
• Has anyone seen this medicine before?
• Does anyone know what this is?
• What is it used for?
• When do people use this medicine?
• Who knows what rules there are about using this medicine safely?

Emphasise to the class the importance of using the medicines safely.

Show the class the different images of health professionals. Ask them if they know what job each of the health professionals does?

Sum up by explaining that:
• There are lots of different types of medicines that are used for lots of different illnesses or conditions.
• Health professionals can answer your questions about medicines.
• Medicines can be dangerous if they are not used in a safe way – so don’t use other people’s medicines and if you are unsure ask an adult.
Activity 2 – Questions to ask about medicines
Time allocation: 10 minutes

The idea of this activity is to encourage pupils to think about the questions they could ask about medicines – and then provide them with some suggestions of suitable questions.

Preparation:
Print off a selection of sheets of health professionals and children (KS1c) – enough for one per pupil.
Print off enough copies of the Speech Bubble Questions (KS1d) so that each pupil can have at least two questions.

Delivery:
Give each pupil a sheet with a health professional and child on it. In the middle of the table put 2 or 3 sheets of Speech Bubble Questions with a pair of scissors and some glue.
Each child should cut out at least 2 questions they think that the child could ask the health professional and stick it onto the worksheet. They can then colour in the worksheet.

Sum up by asking pupils to hold up their worksheets and read out some of the questions they have chosen – showing the different questions that you can choose to ask about medicines.
Activity 3 – Dear Doctor
Time allocation: 15 minutes

The idea of this activity is to encourage pupils, working in pairs, to apply what they have learnt about the sort of questions they could ask about medicines by sharing that information with others.

Preparation:
Print out a Dear Doctor letter for each pair of pupils – equal numbers of each sheet (KS2a).

Delivery:
Hand out the Dear Doctor worksheets to each pair of pupils, making sure you alternate the worksheet they receive (so they don’t have the same sheet as the next pair).

Ask the class to read the Dear Doctor letter, read all three responses and then pick the response that they think is the most appropriate.

Once they have completed the exercise ask the class if they have any other pieces of advice for Josie or Ashley – ask if there are any questions Josie or Ashley might want to ask next time they visit the doctor or pharmacist.
Activity 4 – Mixed Up Medicines
Time allocation: 5-10 minutes

Preparation:
Print out one copy of the Mixed Up Medicines worksheet (KS2b) per pupil.
This worksheet could be used as a homework exercise

Delivery:
Pupils should follow the instructions on the sheet and draw a line connecting the disease/condition with the medicine. Tell them that there may be more than one answer for some of the conditions.

Activity 5 – Medicines Word Search
Time allocation: 10 minutes

Preparation:
Print out one copy of the Medicines Word Search sheet (KS2c) per pupil.
This word search could be used as a homework exercise. Print off some copies of the Create Your Own Medicines Word Search worksheet (KS2d) for pupils who complete the word search quickly. They can make up their own word search for their partner to complete.

Delivery:
Pupils should follow the instruction on the sheet and draw a line around the medicine-related words that they can find in the word search.
Activity 6 – Storing Medicines Safely
Time allocation: 10 minutes

Preparation:
Print out one copy of the Storing Medicines Safely worksheet (KS2e) per pupil. Make sure each pupil has access to two different coloured pens/pencils (one to colour in the safe places to store medicines and one for the dangerous places to store medicines).

Delivery:
Ask the pupils to look at the worksheet and try to spot the medicines hidden in the picture. When they have found a medicine, they need to think about if it is in a safe place for a medicine, or in a dangerous place. All the medicines in a safe place should be coloured in with one colour (e.g. green). The medicines in dangerous places should be coloured in with a different colour (e.g. red).

Additional materials to take home

Consider printing off copies of the My Medicine checklist (M1) for pupils to take home and show their parents what they have learnt during the day.

The checklist is designed for parents to complete with their child whenever they receive a new medicine. As well as giving the child a chance to put what they have learnt into practice, it also shows the parent what sort of questions they could ask about medicines.

You can download the My Medicine checklist by visiting www.askaboutmedicines.org
ASKING ABOUT MEDICINES AS WE GROW UP

KS1b

Pharmacist

Pharmacist

ask
about medicines

NPA National Pharmacy Association
ASKING ABOUT MEDICINES

KS1c
What does this medicine do?
When should I take this medicine?

Why do I need to take this medicine?
How long will I need to take this medicine?

Who should look after this medicine?
What is this medicine called?
Where can I go for more information?

Could there be any side effects with this medicine?

How do I take this medicine?
ASKING ABOUT MEDICINES
AS WE GROW UP

KS1e
ASKING ABOUT MEDICINES

As we grow up
KS1f

ASKING ABOUT MEDICINES

AS WE GROW UP

NPA National Pharmacy Association

ask about medicines
ASKING ABOUT MEDICINES

KS1f
Hospital
Doctor's Waiting Room
Pharmacy

Hospital
Doctor's Waiting Room
Pharmacy
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What</th>
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<th>When</th>
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<td>is this</td>
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<td>should I</td>
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<td>medicine</td>
<td>after this medicine?</td>
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<td>Why do I need to take this medicine?</td>
<td>How long will I need to take this medicine?</td>
<td>Where can I go for more information?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Why do I need to take this medicine?</td>
<td>How long will I need to take this medicine?</td>
<td>Where can I go for more information?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Dear Doctor

My name is Josie and I have asthma. I need to use an inhaler for my asthma. When I go to the doctors or nurse my Mum and the doctor spend all the time talking about my medicine and asthma but they do not really ask me what I think. How can I make sure that they don’t ignore me when we go to the doctors?

From
Josie
Aged 10
Which letter is the most appropriate response - A, B or C?  

A) Dear Josie

It doesn’t matter if the doctor ignores you. Only your Mum is allowed to ask questions about your asthma and your medicines. Just make sure you keep quiet and don’t bother them by asking questions even if you are worried about your medicines.

Yours truly or falsely
Dr Smith

B) Dear Josie

It is important to be involved in decisions about the medicines that you need to take. You should think about some of the questions you would like to ask next time you go to the doctors - maybe write them down so you don’t forget. Tell your Mum that you have some important questions that you would like to ask the doctor.

Yours truly or falsely
Dr Smith

C) Dear Josie

Doctors are very busy and don’t have time to answer questions from little girls. Try not to bother them when they are talking. Take a book or comic with you to keep you busy while they are discussing your asthma.

Yours truly or falsely
Dr Smith

When you have selected the right letter write your own response to Josie suggesting some of the questions she could ask her doctor the next time she sees him.
This letter has been written by a boy concerned about his medicine. Read the boy’s letter and the three different responses from Dr Smith. Which one do you think is the best response?

Dear Doctor

I have diabetes and have to have insulin injections three times a day. I usually have to have an injection at lunchtime at school, it makes me feel different when I have to use my insulin and some of the other kids think I am weird. I want to stop having injections at school but my parents and teacher say I can’t. What can I do?

From
Ashley
Aged 9
Which letter is the most appropriate response - A, B or C?  

A) Dear Ashley

It must be very hard for you using your insulin at school. The best advice I can give you is to only use it when you feel like it. You don’t want your friends to tease you so it is best to keep it a secret. You should decide when you want to take your medicine - after all it is your body.

Yours truly or falsely
Dr Smith

B) Dear Ashley

If I were you I’d take more insulin in the morning or when you get home from school. Don’t worry about what your Doctor has told you before. Ignore the instructions you have been given already and use it twice a day - you can change the dose yourself and it should be fine.

Yours truly or falsely
Dr Smith

C) Dear Ashley

It is important that you take your insulin when your doctor has told you to - otherwise it will not help you to control your diabetes properly. Ask the doctor if there are any other ways you can take your insulin and make sure he knows if you are having any problems with your medicines. With the other pupils at school, you could try explaining to them why it is important that you have the insulin injections at school - it might help them to understand.

Yours truly or falsely
Dr Smith

When you have selected the right letter write your own response to Ashley suggesting some of the questions he could ask his doctor the next time he sees him.
Which type of medicine can be used for these conditions?

Draw a line linking the medicine to the condition (there may be more than one medicine that can treat the condition).

- asthma
- headache
- ear ache
- skin rash
- diabetes
Can you find these words?
They lie in all directions

MEDICINE ☐ PILL ☐ WHY ☐
INHALER ☐ WHAT ☐ PHARMACY ☐
HOW ☐ CREAM ☐ NURSE ☐

---

L C I N H P J X I S
P K M E D I C I N E
H E T G A L S U H Y
A S H J E L W T A C
R B N O T Q R O L U
M N Z R W H A T E K
A U F O J B E A R T
C R E A M T O S G F
Y S L B D U X W H Y
O E R T P B A C M P
Create your own medicines word search

Make sure that you use words that relate to medicines and what you have learnt during the lesson. Write the words that are hidden in the grid in the spaces below and give it to your partner to complete.
Look at the picture

Some of the medicines in the picture are being stored in a safe place and some of the medicines are in a dangerous place.

Pick two different coloured crayons or pencils. Colour in the medicines that are in a safe place in one colour and those that are in an unsafe place in the other colour.

- A safe place to store a medicine
- A dangerous place to store a medicine
TEMPLATE MATERIALS

- Letter of introduction to school
- School/teacher evaluation form
- User Evaluation form
Letter of introduction to school

Your Name
Your Organisation/Business
Address
Address
Address
Postcode
Date
Dear <Head teacher/teacher name>

Educating young people about medicines

My name is <name> and I am <profession in local area>.

Would you like me to visit your school to deliver a lesson or assembly focusing on medicines to educate young people on how to use medicines safely and effectively?

My visit would be part of a national initiative developed Ask About Medicines – the independent campaign to increase people’s involvement in decisions about their use of medicines. They have produced education materials with the help and support of the Department of Health and the National Pharmacy Association.

As you probably know, many children in your school take medicines on a regular basis. In any given week 20% of young people are taking medicines. But a great many children and adolescents don’t take their medicines as prescribed. Children and young people are more likely to benefit from treatment – whether medicines or something else – if they understand what it is for and have had a say in deciding the right treatment for them. Asking questions about medicines helps children and young people to be involved in decisions about their use of medicines, and helps improve communication between health professionals and young patients.

Asking about medicines as we grow up is very important because the more young people know about their medicines, and any other treatment options available, the more they can start to safely take control of their health. A decision not to use a medicine can be a good decision if it is based on sound knowledge and understanding of all the pros and cons. It cannot be a good decision if it is based on hearsay, scare stories or unvoiced fears.

Children and young people need to know who they can turn to for help and support with their medicines, and the sort of questions they could ask. Asking questions of health professionals can be very daunting, even for adults, especially if you are not feeling well. Children need to be given an opportunity to practise formulating and asking questions from an early age so that they can prepare to take control of their own health later on.
Prescribed medicines receive only minimal attention in the National Curriculum, often as a small part of education about drugs of abuse. The lesson is designed to meet the need for more information on medicines to be taught in schools.

The sessions/lessons are broadly in line with <key stage details>.

With your permission and in liaison with your staff I could deliver a fun and informative session on medicines including role-play activities and worksheets. The core message is medicines safety and the importance of asking questions about medicines.

If you would like to talk to me about this opportunity please contact me on <telephone number>.

Working together I hope we will be able to support young people to ask about medicines, so they can use medicines safely and effectively as they grow up

Kind regards

<Name>
<Position>
School/teacher evaluation form

We would appreciate your feedback on how you felt the medicines information session/lesson was received by your pupils. Please take a few minutes to complete this fax back form and return it to the person who delivered the session or to Ask About Medicines (c/o MMS) on 01225 422533 or by email to info@askaboutmedicines.org

Your name: ______________________________________________________

Position: ______________________________________________________

School/Venue: ___________________________________________________

Date of medicines session: _________________________________________

Person who delivered lesson (if not you): ____________________________

Profession of person who delivered lesson (if not you): _________________

Number of pupils at session: _______________________________________

Age of pupils: ___________________________________________________

Overall, how would you rate the session/lesson on medicines?

Excellent ☐ Good ☐ Average ☐ Poor ☐

How relevant do you feel the topic is for your pupils?

Very relevant ☐ Fairly relevant ☐ Minimally relevant ☐ Not relevant ☐

As a whole, how would you rate the content of the lesson?

Excellent ☐ Good ☐ Average ☐ Poor ☐

How would you rate the delivery of the lesson?

Excellent ☐ Good ☐ Average ☐ Poor ☐

How would you be to recommed a session on medicines to a colleague in another school?

Very likely ☐ Fairly likely ☐ Not very likely ☐ Not at all ☐

What feedback would you like to give on the content or organisation of the lesson/session:

_________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________

Please return this by fax to: 01225 422533 or email info@askaboutmedicines.org
Lesson Pack

User Evaluation

We would like to hear about your experiences at your local school and how useful this pack has been. Please complete this form and return it by fax to Ask About Medicines (c/o MMS) on 01225 422533.

Name: ____________________________________________

Profession: _______________________________________

Address: _________________________________________

Telephone: ________________________________________

Email: ____________________________________________

Where did you carry out the medicines lesson/session? _____________________________________________

How many young people were at the session? _______________________________________________________

What age were they? ____________________________________________

As a whole, how interested were the audience in the topic of medicines?

Very interested [ ]  Fairly interested [ ]  Averagely interested [ ]  Not at all [ ]

What was the most successful part of the lesson? _____________________________________________________

What was the least successful part of the lesson? _____________________________________________________

How useful did you find this pack in preparing for and delivering the session/lesson?

Very useful [ ]  Fairly useful [ ]  Of some use [ ]  Not at all [ ]

How likely are you to deliver another session on medicines to young people in the future?

Very likely [ ]  Fairly likely [ ]  Not very likely [ ]  Not at all [ ]

What advice would you give to a professional colleague who was considering giving a lesson about medicine?

______________________________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________________________

Thank you for your time. If you have an evaluation form from the local school or teacher, we’d love to know their thoughts. Please consider faxing it with this form.

Please return this by fax to: 01225 422533 or email info@askaboutmedicines.org
My Medicine

Fill in this check list with your mum/dad/carer or a doctor, nurse or pharmacist to help you understand more about your medicine and how to use it safely.

My name is: ________________________________

I have: (Condition/Illness) ______________________ My medicine is: ____________________________

If makes me feel ill here...

Mark where you feel ill...

Inhaler ☐  Pills ☐  Syringe ☐

This medicine works by: ________________________________

I take my medicine: ______ times ☐ a day ☐ a week ☐ when I feel I need it

9:3  9:3  9:3  9:3

I take my medicine at: ________________________________

I keep taking my medicine until: (date) __________________________ or my treatment changes

I keep my medicine safely here:

Cabinet ☐  Fridge ☐  School Bag ☐  Teacher ☐  Parent/Carer ☐

Anything else I need to remember: ________________________________

If you have any questions about your medicines you can ask a doctor, nurse, pharmacist or your mum/dad/carer.
Acknowledgements

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In particular, we would like to thank:

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Catherine Wilson, EPP CIC
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Joan Ainsworth, Uplands School, Poole
Class 2JA, Uplands School, Poole
Class 5ZB, Uplands School, Poole
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Will Carlile, NPA
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London Colney JMI School
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