

## MEDICINES

- Knowledge** After working through this lesson, participants will be able to:
- Attitude**
- Practice**
1. Describe some of the risks of taking medicines.
  2. Give advice to pregnant women and parents of young children about taking medicines.
  3. Share this knowledge with their neighbors and friends using the *Medicines and toxins* teaching booklet.
- Overview** This series of lessons is based on the *Health Education Program for Developing Communities*, which is available from <http://hepfdc.info/>. These lessons are accompanied by a series of health teaching booklets on the individual topics. These lessons are based on information and standards from the World Health Organization. The lessons can be used with adults or with older children and teens.
- Materials** *Collect these items before beginning the lesson:*
- Poster-size paper, markers, and masking tape
  - Role Play
  - Picture Book, *Medicines and Toxins*

### LESSON

60 minutes

#### Role Play: (5 minutes)

*Instructions:* Two mothers are talking.

1<sup>st</sup>: My son has a cough, so I took him to the clinic.

2<sup>nd</sup>: How did that work out?

1<sup>st</sup>: Great! They gave him a medicine for pneumonia, another for asthma, one for his fever, a cough syrup, and an antihistamine and a decongestant.

2<sup>nd</sup>: Isn't that a lot of medicines?

1<sup>st</sup>: Yes, but one of them is sure to work!

Ask SHO Questions:

*What did you See?*

*What was Happening?*

*Does this happen in Our place?*

#### Risks Of Medicines (15 minutes)

**A.** What are some of the risks of taking medicines?

1. All medicines are toxins or poisons if taken in the wrong dose.
2. Children can die from taking too much medicine.
3. Children can also choke on pills and tablets.
4. Many frequently advertised preparations, such as cold and cough medicines and diarrhea medicines cause more harm than good.

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5. Medicines may cause unnecessary deaths, especially in children
  6. Sometimes people have an allergic reaction to medicines.
  7. They may develop hives, or difficulty breathing.
  8. All medicines have side effects.
  9. Some medicines may cause nausea or vomiting.
  10. Often antibiotics are overused.
  11. If antibiotics are used too much, people may develop resistance.
  12. Resistance means that the antibiotic won't work the next time you take it.
- B.** What groups of people are most susceptible to the harmful effects of medicines?
1. Young children
  2. Pregnant women
  3. Developing babies

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### **Preventing Side Effects** (20 minutes)

*Instructions:* What advice do you have to prevent these harmful side effects of medicines? Divide into small groups. Half the groups give advice to pregnant mothers. The others give advice to parents of young children.

- A.** Parents of young children
1. Give medicine only as directed by your health care provider.
  2. Avoid unnecessary medicines like decongestants and cough syrups.
  3. Take only the amount that is prescribed.
  4. Do NOT think, "More medicine is better."
  5. Do not give too high a dosage.
  6. Keep all medicines out of the reach of children.
  7. You can use a locked medicine cabinet.
  8. Do not give pills or capsules because children may choke.
  9. Many medicines come in a liquid form, or as a syrup.
  10. You can crush a pill or chewable vitamin between two spoons.
  11. After pills or vitamins are crushed, you can mix them with a small amount of liquid
- B.** Advice for pregnant women
1. Developing babies are very susceptible to the harmful effects of medicines.
  2. Try to take no medicines other than vitamins.
  3. Check with your health care provider before giving any medicines.
  4. If you are pregnant, never drink alcohol, take drugs, or use tobacco.
  5. All of these can cause damage to the developing baby.
  6. It is important that pregnant women take vitamins.
  7. Folic acid given at the very beginning of pregnancy can prevent spine and nerve defects.
  8. Women who may become pregnant should also avoid alcohol and tobacco. They should take vitamins.
- C.** Do you have any other instructions about taking medicines?
1. Take medicine only as directed by your health care provider.
  2. Every medicine can cause side effects, even if taken in the right dosage.
  3. Aspirin and ibuprofen are common medicines. But they can harm your stomach.
  4. So take only medicines that you really need.
  5. If any medicine is making you feel worse, stop it and talk with your health care provider.

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6. However, talk with your health care provider before stopping blood pressure medicines.

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**Picture Book** (20 minutes)

- A. Divide into pairs. Practice teaching each other the picture book, *Medicines and toxins*.
- B. During the week, visit your friends and neighbors to teach about medicines using the teaching booklet.

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**References:**

Health Education Program for Developing Communities. Available from: <https://hepfdc.org/>

## HEALTH EDUCATION: MEDICINES - STARTER

Role play:

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