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Medical Supplies

It's tempting to store medical supplies in a medicine cabinet; after all, the name suggests as much. However, the bathroom is not the best place to store medicines; the humidity can cause them to lose effectiveness. Most medicines are meant to be stored in a cool, dark, dry place.

Be sure to read the label and printed instructions on each bottle of medication you may be taking, and familiarize yourself with the dosage, side effects, and interactions. Do not transfer pills from their original packaging -- doing so increases the chance of taking the wrong pills or doses.

Check your medical supplies every six months and replace any used, missing, or expired contents. Dispose of expired medications by taking them to a pharmacy with a take-back program or securing them in a trash bag that is out of reach of children and animals. (Do not flush them down the toilet; doing so is bad for the environment.) The following medicines and supplies are suggested only for use by adults older than 18.

- Antacids
- Antibiotic ointment
- Anti-diarrhea medication
- Antihistamines
- Anti-itch topical medication, such as hydrocortisone or calamine lotion
- Aspirin
- Band-Aids
- Cold and/or flu medications
- Cough medicines (Decongestant, Expectorant)
- Fever and pain reducers
- Laxatives

- Pain relievers (Acetaminophen, Anti-inflammatory)
- Rubbing alcohol
- Sore-throat spray
- Small pair of scissors
- Sunscreen, at least SPF 15
- Thermometer
- Tweezers