

Consumer Product Safety Alert

FROM THE U.S. CONSUMER PRODUCT SAFETY COMMISSION, WASHINGTON, D.C. 20207

Child Resistant Packaging Saves Lives

The staff of the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) estimates that child-resistant packaging for aspirin and oral prescription medicine saved the lives of about 700 children since the requirements went into effect in the early 1970's.

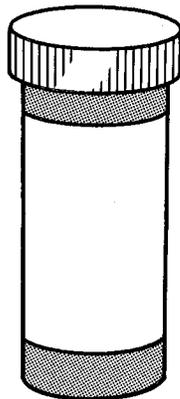
CPSC analyzed child fatality data for accidental ingestions of aspirin and oral prescription medicines. The death rates for aspirin and oral prescription medicines declined even after taking account of the overall decline in the accidental child death rate from all causes. The study also accounted for changes in per capita product consumption and reductions in the aspirin fatality rate associated with therapeutic overdose.

The CPSC study showed that child-resistant packaging reduced the aspirin-related child death rate by up to 0.88 deaths per million children under age five. The results also showed that special packaging reduced the oral prescription medicine-related death rate by up to 1.27 deaths per million children under age five. This represents a fatality rate reduction of up to 45

percent from levels that would have been projected in the absence of child-resistant packaging requirements.

The lower fatality rate represents a total reduction of about 700 child deaths since the requirements for child-resistant packaging on these products went into effect in the early 1970's.

The estimate of about 700 lives saved relates to aspirin and oral prescription medicines only and does not include additional lives that may have been saved by child-resistant packaging on other products. Therefore, the CPSC's staff concludes that child-resistant packaging saves lives. Consumers should use child-resistant packaging to help prevent accidental poisonings with medicines and household chemicals.



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