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Pharmacists: Keep pills out of reach of young children



Children's fever pills may look like colourful candy and even come in banana or cherry flavours these days, making them far more attractive to children. PHOTO: ST FILE

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Carolyn Khew (mailto:kcarolyn@sph.com.sg)

SINGAPORE- Your children's fever pills may look like colourful candy and even come in banana or cherry flavours these days, making them far more attractive to children.

This means that pharmacists here have seen cases of kids being rushed to the hospital for mistakenly ingesting medicine - prompting them to urge parents to keep them out of easy reach.

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This was among the key messages of a health fair organised by the Pharmaceutical Society of Singapore on Sunday in collaboration with North West Community Development Council. Held at Woodlands Civic Centre, the society which represents pharmacists here, hopes that the annual health fair "Own Your Health @ North West" will encourage everyone to take charge of their health.

Ms Esther Ang, a pharmacist from KK Women's and Children's Hospital, said that children aged one to five years' old are curious and hence prone to taking medications by accident.

Over the years, medications for common ailments like cough, fever and flu, also come in colourful tablets and flavours such as cherry and grape.

"If placed in common areas, children might just help themselves to it because it looks or tastes like ribena, for instance," said Ms Ang.

It is also important for parents to give correct dosages of medication to their children, said Ms Ng Hong Yen, president of the Pharmaceutical Society of Singapore.

Instead of using teaspoons to administer medications, parents should administer the appropriate dosage using syringes.

Apart from protecting children by administering and storing medicines at home properly, the society also hopes the fair will educate people on how to manage minor ailments such as cough and flu, effectively, as well as the importance of having the elderly write out a list of prescribed medicines they have to take so as to avoid confusion.

The event's guest of honour Khaw Boon Wan, Coordinating Minister for Infrastructure, Minister for Transport, and Advisor to Sembawang GROs thanked the pharmacists and the student volunteers from Pharmaceutical Society of Singapore and NUS Pharmaceutical Society for co-organising the event with the North West CDC.

"The approach to work with the pharmacists to protect our children through safe administration of medicine, to self-medicate for minor ailments, and to manage chronic illnesses of our parents and grandparents, is refreshing," he added.

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