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## Ahead of Cold and Flu Season, Health Coalition Issues Medicine Safety Tips

### Double Check Medicine Labels, Avoid Doubling Up on Acetaminophen

WASHINGTON, D.C. – As consumers start getting flu shots and stocking home medicine cabinets in anticipation of the coming cold and flu season, the [Acetaminophen Awareness Coalition](#) is issuing a consumer message to “*Double Check, Don’t Double Up*” on acetaminophen when treating winter illnesses. The nationwide awareness effort is a helpful reminder on the importance of medicine safety when treating cold and flu symptoms. Acetaminophen is the most common drug ingredient in America. It is found in more than 600 different medicines, including prescription (Rx) and over-the-counter (OTC) pain relievers, fever reducers, sleep aids and numerous medicines for cough, cold and flu. It is safe and effective when used as directed, but there is a limit to how much can be taken in one day. Taking more than directed is an overdose and can lead to liver damage.

Flu shots can be a good way to protect yourself, but if and when a winter illness strikes, consumers taking medicines containing acetaminophen should follow these four safety steps when treating cold, cough or flu symptoms:

1. Always read and follow the medicine label.
2. [Know if medicines](#) contain acetaminophen, which is in bold type or highlighted in the “active ingredients” section of the Drug Facts Label on over-the-counter medicines and sometimes listed as “APAP” or “acetam” on prescription labels.
3. Never take two medicines that contain acetaminophen at the same time.
4. Ask your healthcare provider or a pharmacist if you have questions about dosing instructions or medicines that contain acetaminophen.

The Acetaminophen Awareness Coalition, a diverse group of leading health, healthcare provider and consumer organizations, urges consumers to double check their medicine labels so they don’t double up on medicines that contain acetaminophen when treating cold and flu symptoms. The Coalition supports the [Know Your Dose Campaign](#) to educate consumers about safe acetaminophen use in order to prevent liver damage.

