

Pre-Reading Discussion: How do you find out if the medication (over-the-counter and/or prescription) is safe for you?

Directions: This passage is about Tina and her 10 year-old daughter. Tina's daughter suffers from motion sickness. With the help of a pharmacist, Tina buys some over-the-counter medicine.

Tina and her 10 year-old daughter Alana live in Buffalo. They were planning a trip to see Tina's mom in New York City. The drive would take about six and a half hours.

Tina's old car was acting up. She did not trust it on the highway. Air fare cost way too much. The only way to get there was on the bus. But bus rides always made Alana feel sick. She was afraid she would throw up on such a long trip.

"Go to the drug store and buy some motion sickness pills," Tina's mom told her.

At the drug store there were so many different brands. Tina felt overwhelmed. She asked the pharmacist to help her.

"Is the medicine for you?" asked the pharmacist.

"No, it's for my 10 year-old daughter," said Tina.

"This brand is good," said the pharmacist. She handed a box to Tina. "The tablets are chewable." She pointed

to the label. “It tells you here the dose for children under 12 is one half the adult dose. But don’t give this to a child under two. Does your daughter have asthma or a breathing problem?”

“No,” said Tina. “Why do you ask?”

“It tells you on the label that if you have a breathing problem you should ask your doctor before taking this. Also, you would not take this yourself if you were pregnant or breast feeding.”

“Thanks for your help,” said Tina.

Tina read the label very carefully before she gave the medicine to Alana. It said to take one tablet an hour before starting the trip. The bus left at 8:20 a.m. At 7:20 a.m. Tina split a tablet in half. She gave it to Alana to chew.

The label said to take the medicine every 20 minutes in the first hour of the trip, but only as needed. After that you could take it once every 4-6 hours.

After they got on the bus, Tina said, “Alana, tell me if you start to feel dizzy or if your tummy is upset. You might need to chew another half tablet in a little while.”

Tina kept an eye on the time. She made sure she did not give Alana more doses than the label said.

The bus trip took seven hours. Alana started to feel queasy two times, so Tina gave her two more doses during the trip.

Tina's mom met them at the bus station in New York. She gave them a big hug. "How was the bus ride?" she asked Alana.

"Good," she said. "I only felt queasy a few times, but Mom gave me some medicine. It worked!"

"Well done, Tina," her mom said. "Now let's go home and get you both something to eat."

Questions for Discussion:

Can you relate to Tina's experience?

Do you read medicine labels? What would you do if you didn't fully understand them?