

## Our Work is Not Done!

Roll up your sleeves and get ready to fight... again. We have accomplished a lot since the Foundation began in 1974, but we continue our work. Just pick up the newspaper, turn on your television, visit your local pharmacy or browse the news on your computer and you will soon find a reason for us to step up our fight against Reye's Syndrome!

As we reported in our last issue, some pharmaceutical companies have begun labeling their low dose aspirin as 'baby' aspirin again! The foundation and all our volunteers worked tirelessly to get the FDA mandated warning on the aspirin package and it is still required today but most companies put it on the back or the side of the package. But what a contradiction when the front of the label clearly has the term 'baby' or 'children's' on it! It is misleading the consumer into thinking that it is a 'safe' dose! When a parent is looking for that product, it is usually because they are already dealing with a sick child and want fast relief! The front of the package will be the only part that most of them read! Additionally, it is more confusing because if they do read the dosage information on the side of the package, it lists the dosage for children and infants

but then has the FDA mandated Reye's Syndrome warning on another side, or the back.

Why would you want to deceive or mislead a parent of a sick child, rather than assisting them in keeping their child safe and well? This deceptive marketing practice has the potential to do great harm to our children! Parents are also often enticed into purchasing aspirin for their children because of the low cost. When they can purchase a bottle for only \$1.00 and the front and side of the package leads them to believe that it is the proper medicine for their child, why would they choose a higher priced item?

The media does very little to help the situation when they, too, often refer to low-dose aspirin as 'baby aspirin' or 'children's aspirin'. It is bad enough when we see it in print media, but now Bayer has started a television advertising campaign in which they refer to their low-dose aspirin as 'baby aspirin'. No mention is made, either spoken or in visible text, of the danger of Reye's Syndrome. This has the potential to be seen and heard by millions of consumers! This is very frightening. We all are aware of how well television commercials guide consumer

purchases.

One of the top stories in the news this year has been the threat of bird-flu and the possibility of it reaching the United States. There have been no reported cases so far here, but many felt it is not a matter of 'if', but 'when' it will happen. Although some government and health agencies have had influenza pandemic preparedness plans in the works for several years, the bird-flu scare has prompted them to review these plans and solidify the mechanics of inter-agency communication and assistance. The planning committees are consisting of representatives from business, education, health, communications, and government agencies. They are addressing questions of responsibility, jurisdiction, and tactics in advance rather than waiting till the pandemic is happening. Every influenza pandemic preparedness plan needs to include information about Reye's Syndrome. If we have an influenza pandemic, the number of cases of Reye's Syndrome will almost definitely increase. The first reported bird-flu death was actually the result of Reye's Syndrome. We need to prevent this from happening again!

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Bird-flu is not the only type of influenza that is stirring up a scare. Any type of influenza outbreak has the potential to become a pandemic and can lead to an upsurge in Reye's Syndrome cases. The Center for Disease Control (CDC) reports that more than 36,000 US Residents die each year from influenza and its complications. How many of those deaths were actually cases of Reye's Syndrome is unknown since it is often misdiagnosed and no longer a reportable disease to the CDC. Parts of the pandemic preparedness plans are programs geared toward encouraging the public to get vaccinations. Influenza vaccination awareness programs and clinics need to alert people to the danger of Reye's Syndrome.

The Foundation was founded more than 30 years ago and we have worked diligently to eradicate Reye's Syndrome but we are not finished yet! We have made great strides. The number of cases of Reye's Syndrome has decreased dramatically but we can't stop here. It is time to "Step It Up A Notch" and work harder to prevent history from repeating itself.

We just completed our annual Superintendent's Mailing, which sent information packets to over 16,000 schools across the country. The packets include our updated "Medications Containing Aspirin", and "Topical Products that

Contain Aspirin" lists along with a suggestion sheet for ways to distribute the information. This year it also included a wall poster designed from our "Be Informed about Reye's Syndrome" magnet. These packets are in addition to the almost daily requests we receive from parents, survivors, grandparents and medical professionals for information. Our website experiences over 400,000 hits per month and some days the phone does not stop ringing! But it is not enough!

We need to "roll up our sleeves" and prepare to work harder, smarter, and faster. We still have a long battle ahead of us!

We need to stand up and be heard!

We need to join forces and let the pharmaceutical companies and retailers know that they need to help us protect our children, not harm them!

We need to provide awareness materials to any organization that is formulating an influenza pandemic preparedness plan or holding an immunization clinic.

We need to let the media know that "baby aspirin" and "children's aspirin" are not acceptable terms. We need to spread the word and protect our children!

## **What You Can Do To Help....**

Check your local pharmacy and grocery store. Are they selling aspirin labeled "baby" or "children's"? Do the packages contain dosage information for children or infants? Where are these products located in the store? Are they in an aisle or area that only contains items that are intended for children? If you find any of these things to be true, talk to the pharmacy manager or store manager. Tell them about our concern regarding these products. Ask them to stop carrying these items or at least to move them to an area where they will not be mistaken as products suitable for a child's use.

Make sure the government and health agencies in your area know about Reye's Syndrome. When they are gathering information for their Influenza Pandemic Preparedness Plans, ask them to include information about avoiding aspirin and the dangers of Reye's Syndrome.

Check with your local schools and daycares to verify they received our annual update and that they are distributing them to their students and parents. If they did not receive a packet, please contact the National Office and we will send them one.

If you have an idea...contact us at the National Office!

## List of Ingredients to watch out for:

Acetyl Salicylic Acid  
Acetylsalicylate  
Acetylsalicylic Acid  
Aluminum Acetyl Salicylate  
Ammonium Salicylate  
Amyl Salicylate  
Arthropan  
Aspirin  
Benzyl Salicylate  
Butyloctyl Salicylate  
Calcium Acetyl Salicylate  
Choline Salicylate  
Ethyl Salicylate  
Lithium Salicylate  
Methyl Salicylate  
Methylene Disalicylic Acid  
Octisalate  
Octyl Salicylate  
Phenyl Salicylate  
Procaine Salicylate  
Sal Ethyl Carbonate  
Salicylamide  
Salicylanilide  
Salicylsalicylic Acid  
Santaly Salicylate  
Sodium Salicylate  
Stoncyrate  
Strontium Salicylate  
Sulfosalicylic Acid  
Tridecyl Salicylate  
Trolamine Salicylate

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