Teen Asthma and Allergies Linked to Tylenol Use

August 17, 2010

Teenagers who regularly used Tylenol (acetaminophen) were more than twice as likely as other adolescents who didn't pop the over-the-counter med to have asthma and other allergies, according to a study published in the *American Journal of Respiratory and Critical Care Medicine* and reported by HealthDay News.

For the study, researchers analyzed data about acetaminophen use, asthma and allergies (wheezing and allergic nasal congestion or rhinoconjunctivitis and eczema–recurrent rashes) from 323, 000 questionnaires from children ages 13 to 14.

Researchers divided children into two groups: "medium" users (participants who had taken the drug at least once during the previous year) and "high" users (those who took the drug at least once each month during the previous year).

Scientists found the asthma risk was 2.5 times higher among "high" users and 43 percent higher in "medium" users compared with those who never used acetaminophen.

In addition, frequent users of acetaminophen were also more than twice as likely as non-users to have rhinoconjunctivitis while medium users had a 38 percent greater risk.

Additionally, frequent users of acetaminophen had a 99 percent increased risk of eczema while those who used the med less often had a 31 percent increased risk of these recurrent rashes.

"We cannot assume causation, but the association was found in widely different communities, with widely different patterns of illness and lifestyles," said study author Richard Beasley, a professor of medicine at the Medical Research Institute of New Zealand. "When you put it together with all of the other studies, clearly there is [cause for concern]."

But if you use acetaminophen to reduce your child's fever and pain, don't rush to dump the medicine.

Acetaminophen is still the preferred drug for children to take who have asthma. "Its safety profile

is better than ibuprofen, and our findings don’t change that,” said Beasley.

To play it safe, experts suggested limiting acetaminophen use and recommended that in families who had a tendency to develop allergic reactions to the drug should consider an alternative.

Learn which programs are available to manage childhood asthma here.

© 2026 Smart + Strong All Rights Reserved.
http://beta.docker.realhealthmag.com/article/Teen-asthma-Tylenol-18961-8297