



Decision Making

Taking Medicine

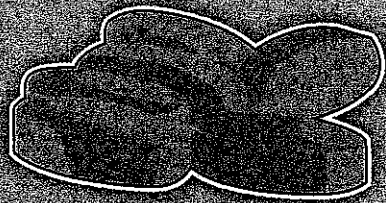
Katie runs track. Because of all the training she does, Katie often has sore muscles. She takes an over-the-counter pain reliever for her sore muscles, but lately it hasn't been helping. What should Katie do?

Remember the six steps of the decision-making process:

1. State the situation.
2. List the options.
3. Weigh the possible outcomes.
4. Consider your values.
5. Make a decision and act on it.
6. Evaluate the decision.



Use these steps to determine what you would do if you were in Katie's situation.



Relieving Pain

Have you ever had sore muscles, a toothache, or a headache? If you took medicine to feel better, it was most likely a pain reliever. Pain relievers block pain signals sent through the nervous system. Many pain relievers are available as over-the-counter (OTC) medicine, or a medicine that you can buy without a doctor's permission. These include aspirin, ibuprofen, and acetaminophen. Aspirin can also reduce swelling. Some painkillers, such as codeine, treat more serious pain and are available only with a prescription. A prescription (prih-SKRIP-shuhn) medicine is a medicine that can be obtained legally only with a doctor's written permission. Prescription medicines require a written order because they typically carry more risks.

Why are medicines regulated by the government?



Managing Disease

Some medicines help people manage chronic diseases or conditions, such as allergies, asthma, diabetes, or mental illnesses such as anxiety and depression. People with diabetes take insulin to help control their blood sugar. People with allergies can take antihistamines to treat swelling and other allergy symptoms.

Often, medicine is taken by swallowing. However, medicine can be given in a number of different ways. The various methods of delivering medicine to the body include:

- **Swallowing, or ingestion.** A pill, tablet, capsule, or liquid moves through the stomach into the bloodstream and then through the body. Most pain relievers are taken this way.
- **Injection, or shot.** Injected medicines begin to work more quickly because they directly enter the bloodstream. These are administered by a needle that pierces the skin.
- **Inhalation.** Medicine can be inhaled, or breathed in, as a mist or fine powder. People with asthma may use an inhaler. Cold or sinus medication can also be inhaled through the nose.
- **Topical application.** Cream and ointments can be rubbed directly onto the skin. Patches containing medicine may also be applied to the skin.

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EXPLAIN Name three different kinds of medicine, and tell what each does.