

[Download or Print This Article](#)

Children at risk for medical errors

The April 25, 2001 issue of the Journal of the American Medical Association reports that nearly one out of every 17 prescriptions ordered for children in hospitals is incorrect with dosage errors being the most common.

In the study, 10,778 medication orders to children in Boston Children's Hospital and Massachusetts Hospital for Children were examined. 616 (6%) of the medication orders were made in error. 115 (1 % of the total) had the potential to cause serious injury or death to the patient

The researchers also found that the rate of "near misses" in children and infants is three times higher than it is in adults. Lead researcher Dr. Rainu Kaushal says that "A near-miss is when someone else catches the mistake before the drug is given to the patient and... the patient is not adversely harmed."

According to Kaushal, one of the major problems lies in the fact that drug dosing information is geared to adults and dosages need to be calculated for younger patients based on weight

Kaushal went on to say "As expected, we found that the errors with potential for harm occurred most often in the youngest, most vulnerable patients cared for in the neonatal intensive care unit"

Parents need to be advocates for their children since "they can't express if they are feeling an adverse effect of the drug," Kaushal said. "Parents are the most able to recognize whether or not their child is having a [bad reaction to the drug]."

In commentary, a 1 % error rate that has the potential to cause serious damage or death may not sound like a lot But how quick would you be to get on an airplane if, on every flight, 2-3 people at random would die or suffer serious injury as a result?

Our purpose is to educate and adjust families toward optimal health

with natural chiropractic care.