

SCHOOL HEALTH

Betty Sue Hinkson RN, School Nurse

REYES SYNDROME

Reyes Syndrome is a very serious disease that you should know about. Some people develop Reye's Syndrome as they are getting over a viral illness such as the flu or chicken pox. Reye's Syndrome usually affects people from infancy through young adulthood; however, **no age group is immune**. It generally occurs when someone is recovering from any viral illness. It can develop 3 to 5 days after the onset of the illness. Everyone should be monitored after an illness for the following symptoms: relentless or continuous vomiting, listlessness, drowsiness, personality change, disorientation or confusion, combativeness, delirium, convulsions, or loss of consciousness. Reye's Syndrome should be suspected in anyone who vomits repeatedly. Phone your doctor immediately if these symptoms develop.

Studies have shown that using aspirin or aspirin-containing medications to treat the symptoms of viral illnesses increase the chance of developing Reye's Syndrome. If you

or a member of your family have a viral illness, **do not use aspirin or aspirin-containing medications**. Aspirin is a part of the salicylate family of medicines. Other names may be acetylsalicylate, acetylsalicylic acid, salicylic acid, salicylate etc. Read all labels. Some common over-the-counter medications that contain these are Alka-Seltzer, Excedrine, Dristan, Pepto-Bismol, Vanquish and Doan's.

