



Health & Safety Guide

The health and safety of our campers is our number one priority. We adhere to standards and recommendations from the Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs (LARA) and the American Camp Association (ACA).

Our goal in this guide is to outline Sherman Lake YMCA Summer Camp's policies and protocols to keep all campers in our care safe and healthy. We will review our recommendations for preparing for camp, our arrival procedures, and care for your camper while they are with us for camp.

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Preparing for Camp

Many things can be done at home to help prepare your child for their camp experience. At camp, campers will learn to be more independent and take responsibility for themselves. There are many tasks that families can work on that will help campers be successful with this new responsibility at camp.

Self Care & Hygiene

Make sure your camper can do all of the self-care things they will need to do at camp by themselves. This includes things like brushing their teeth and hair. It can also include working on showering by themselves and making sure they can get all of the shampoo out of their hair. Talk to your camper about how often they should change their underwear and socks, how to hang up a towel so it can be used a few times during the week, and why we need to wear shower shoes. If you are helping your child do a self-care task at home, work with them to make sure they can handle this task on their own or find an alternative for their time at camp.

Missing Home

While missing home is a natural feeling and leads to incredible developmental growth for children, it can be tough knowing your child might feel sad while at camp. Sherman Lake YMCA Camp staff are here to help. Our staff are well trained to identify and help campers who are missing home. Rest assured that a director will call you to discuss ways to best support your camper if they are struggling.

As a caregiver, there are some things that you can do to help prepare your camper. We believe the [American Camp Association](#)'s article '[Homesickness Dos and Don'ts for Parents Preparing for Camp](#)' provides the most helpful advice. Here are some highlights:

- **Talk positively about the camp experience.** Let your child know they are going to have an amazing time at camp; making new friends, while trying exciting new activities.
- **Provide opportunities for your child to practice being away from you.** Sleepovers with friends/family can be a great stepping stone towards a longer sleepaway experience.
- **Visit the camp.** Take advantage of spring camp events or set up a private tour so your child can become familiar with the camp facility and some of its staff.
- **Avoid negative talk about the camp experience.** Avoid saying things like "We will miss you so much," "I don't know what I'll do without you" or "I'll be counting down the days until you return." Comments like these will cause your camper to feel guilty if they are enjoying their time at camp knowing

that you are at home missing them.

- **Do NOT offer a pick-up clause.** Please don't send your child to camp with the phrase "Give it a try and if you don't like it, I'll come and pick you up". If you make a pick-up clause with your child, you will inevitably be faced with the decision to either pick the child up and rob them of a valuable growing experience or break your promise and damage your credibility with your child. Neither of these outcomes are positive and both can be avoided by refraining from offering a pick-up clause.

Lice

We recommend and highly encourage families to check camper's hair for lice in the weeks leading up to camp. If you find it, you can treat it early and it won't interfere with your child's camp experience. We will check for lice during our camp check-in. If we find signs of lice, including the presence of nits, your child will have to go home to do the treatment and care and is likely to miss a significant portion of their camp time.

Wellness

If your child is not feeling well on the first day of camp, please keep them home an extra day and bring them to camp when they no longer exhibit signs of illness. Campers should be fever and vomit-free without the aid of medication for at least 24 hours before arriving at camp. If you have any questions, please call the Camp Director to institute a plan to safeguard the health of all campers and staff.

Insurance

Sherman Lake YMCA Camp does not carry insurance on campers, you must accept responsibility for medical/surgical treatment charges which may be incurred on your child's behalf and provide us with your insurance information.

Upon Arrival At Camp

For Overnight Camp, campers and families will go through our check-in process. The check-in stations are in Kellogg Hall and once all stations are complete, you will proceed to your camper's cabin. Day Campers will be checked in at the transportation site selected on the Travel Form. The Day Camp check-in process only includes medication drop-off.

Health and Head Check

One of the stations is a routine health check, including a baseline temperature reading. There is also a head/hair check for lice. Campers with temperatures of 100 degrees or above, or with head lice or nits, will be sent home. Parents will also be asked to complete a brief, verbal health screening questionnaire.

Medications

The other health station is our medication check-in. Though campers may manage medications on their own in the home, at camp, we must take care to keep all medications safe for all campers in our care. We have a few requirements that all medications that are being administered must follow:

- All medications must be in their original pharmacy containers. Containers will be returned at check-out. We recommend putting all containers in one Ziploc bag with your child's name written on top.
- You do not need to bring over-the-counter medications such as acetaminophen and ibuprofen; the camp has a supply of these. If you give permission to administer over-the-counter medication for aches and pains on the health form, our Camp Health Officers will do so if needed.
- Any medications, including vitamins, inhalers, melatonin and non-prescription medications, must be checked in with the Camp Nurse at Sunday or Monday check-in and need to be in their original containers.
- The Health Form includes a section for medications that need to be completed two weeks before check-in for all vitamins, over-the-counter and prescribed medications that your camper will bring to camp.
- The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that "Elective interruption of medications (drug holiday) should be avoided by campers on long-term psychotropic therapy or those on maintenance therapy required for a chronic medical condition" (*Pediatrics*. 2011; 127(4): 795)

Again, medications such as inhalers, epi-pens, and emergency medications must be checked in by the health team. We want to know about the medication, the need for it along with the severity of the reaction surrounding said medication. For example, the camper is allergic to bees and the reaction is generally mild and we have only needed the epipen one time ever. If the camper can be responsible for the medication, they can carry it with them. If not, these types of medication can be handed to counselors to carry throughout the day.

The above information is also applicable for Day Camp families even though they may not check in at the Sherman Lake YMCA Camp location. Medication should be dropped off to the staff at the transportation site and will be checked in by a camp nurse and Health Officer once it arrives at Sherman Lake YMCA Camp. If they have questions about the medication, our health team will call families directly.

During Camp

While enjoying the camp experience, campers will be monitored by their counselors. Throughout the campers' stay, counselors and staff watch for signs of fatigue, dehydration, improper eating, etc. that may indicate illness. If any health or wellness issues are brought up by your camper or noticed by the counselor, the next step is for campers to see our Health Officers.

Health Officers are seasonal camp staff focused on medication management, first aid and wellness of campers and staff. Our Health Officers are certified in Red Cross Responding to Emergencies (required by the State of Michigan Licensing) and often are studying a subject in the health or medical field at their university. Health Officers are supervised by our camp nurses. Our nurses are licensed RNs who check in with the Health Officers each day. If there are injuries or illnesses that require a professional eye, nurses are on call and will come to camp quickly if needed.

As campers are assessed by Health Officers and nurses, camp directors are also notified so that we can communicate with families. We will reach out to families about various health concerns as needed. Our main reason for communication from our health service team will be if there is an emergency, a suspected communicable disease or if we notice a pattern.

At Sherman Lake YMCA Camp, we have many tools in our health services toolbox to care for your campers. In the next few sections, we will review some of our care protocols and policies for health concerns we see most often at camp. Unless the situation is an emergency, our general care practice is to access the camper, give care, and document.

Headaches

Headaches are very common at camp for many reasons. Campers are more active, they are outside in the sun and they are eating and drinking differently than at home. When campers report a headache, they will be asked about how much water they have had so far today, what activities they have done, and if they often get headaches at home. Health Officers will refer to the health form to see if there is a relevant health history. We will also ask about the severity of the headache and how long they have had the headache. This helps us document where we are now so we can assess for change with treatment.

Treatment for headaches will often start with drinking more water and resting in the shade for 15-30 minutes. If the headache persists, we will give campers an electrolyte drink in their water bottle. After another 30 minutes, we move to an over the counter medication like acetaminophen or ibuprofen if the health form indicates that is acceptable. Health Officers will follow up with the camper in 4-6

hours to ensure the headache has subsided. If the camper indicates that headaches are abnormal for them and the headache continues after the 4-6 hour check in, our health team will call families to notify and seek additional information on care for the camper.

Stomach Ache

If a camper reports a stomach ache, we will ask many questions to see if we can determine the cause or other symptoms relating to the stomach ache. Questions may include the following: What was the last thing you ate and/or drank? Is that food you have had before? Where is the pain? Is it an ache or something different (pinching, shooting pain, burning, etc)? When was the last time you pooped? Was the poop normal or was it different for you? Is this your first time away from home or are you missing home? Do you get stomach aches like this at home? We can learn many things from these questions. We will also take your camper's temperature.

Camp serves food that is different from home and we know that can impact how campers feel. Though we try to serve foods that are recognizable and comfortable for many (hamburgers, macaroni and cheese, tacos, etc.), we know it is still not the same as what they may be used to. We may give the camper a wintergreen mint as it can soothe a queasy or upset stomach and encourage them to sip water while resting.

If the camper describes a general ache along with missing home, we will move forward with the impression that the stomach ache is caused by emotional distress. We will have the counselor or Health Officer talk to the camper about what homesickness can feel like and how we can work through it together to have a great week. We encourage families to talk about missing home before camp. While your camper is at Sherman Lake YMCA Camp, families can:

- Write positive letters with encouragement. Let your child know you are proud of them for trying new activities and making new friends. It is easy to email your camper through our website.
- Contact the camp if you want an update or have any concerns. The camp staff is here to support you just as much as the campers. Camp staff will be happy to provide updates on how your child is adapting to camp and answer any questions you may have.
- Remember that homesickness is normal. Everyone experiences homesickness to different degrees. If we call you to share that your child is homesick, it does not mean that you must come to the rescue. We invite you to work with the staff and provide information that may help your child to overcome the challenges they are facing.

If our assessment leads to other conclusions that could be more serious than a simple stomach ache, we will have the camper rest while we call home to discuss next steps with the family.

Vomiting

When a camper vomits at camp, Health Officers will be called to assess the camper. They will do a wellness check including checking the camper's temperature. They will also ask questions about how they felt before and after vomiting. Health Officers will also ask questions about stress and anxiety, food they have eaten, water intake, and more. We will also ask the camper how they have been feeling and if they have had a headache, sore throat, diarrhea or cough. Our goal is to determine if the camper is sick or ate something that didn't sit well or has an anxious stomach. If we can not rule out illness, we will call families to come and pick the camper up to recover at home for at least 24 hours. The camper can return to camp if they are symptom-free without medication for 24 hours. We understand that vomiting can happen for many reasons but we must use an abundance of caution that we are not having communicable diseases being spread at camp.

Diarrhea or Constipation

Sometimes stomach aches point to diarrhea or constipation as the cause of pain or discomfort. We will ask more questions and refer to the health form to see if there is a relevant history to help us know how to best care for your camper.

If diarrhea has occurred once or twice in a day, we will offer fluids and have the camper rest until the pain subsides. A Camp Director or Health Officer will call home to notify you that we are monitoring your camper to make sure the diarrhea does not continue. Diarrhea can lead to dehydration due to fluid loss so monitoring diarrhea symptoms includes dry mouth and lips, fatigue, dizziness and headache. If diarrhea or other symptoms persist through the day or your camper becomes too uncomfortable to participate in activities or enjoy camp, we will call for families to pick the camper up to recover at home and be more closely monitored.

Constipation is treated similarly. We will offer fluids and encourage the camper to eat more fruits, vegetables and whole grains to help have a bowel movement. We will also encourage them to allow more time to accomplish the bowel movement and may offer a more private place to try to have a bowel movement. We will continue to monitor your camper and may ask them to report bowel movements to the Health Officers. If constipation continues or your camper becomes too uncomfortable to participate in activities or enjoy camp, we will call for families to pick the camper up to recover at home and be more closely monitored.

Fever

If your camper complains of generally not feeling well or lists other symptoms, Health Officers will assess by checking their temperature on the forehead with a no-touch thermometer. When the temperature comes in at 99 degrees or above, the temperature is rechecked with an oral thermometer. Families will be notified immediately if a child has a fever over 100 degrees to pick the camper up from camp. Campers must recover at home for at least 24 hours. They can return to camp when the fever has returned to normal, there is no medication in the system keeping the temperature down and the child is feeling better.

We do acknowledge that camp is happening in the heat of summer. When campers are outside and illness sets in, campers will first be brought inside to rest and hydrate. We would suspect the heat to be the culprit of the illness and would treat the camper for heat-related illness. After 30 minutes inside and if symptoms persist, the temperature will be taken so the body has time to acclimate to the indoor environment.

Head Lice

At overnight camp check-in, all campers go through a health screening that includes a check of the hair for head lice. If lice is suspected, the camper will be checked by a camp nurse. If a lice infestation is confirmed by a nurse, the camper will be sent home for treatment.

During the week, if day or overnight campers exhibit signs of lice, counselors or health officers will check their heads. Checks are done in a discreet and private manner. If the check leads to finding an infestation, a camp nurse will be called in to confirm the lice and the camper's family will be called to pick them up. If a camper is confirmed to have lice during the week, all campers in the cabin or group will be rechecked for lice. Again, we do our best to respect the privacy and dignity of each camper; however, the well-being and safety of all campers and families is our top priority.

Sherman Lake YMCA Summer Camp requires treatment and complete removal of all lice and nits before returning to camp. Head-to-head contact with an already infested person is the most common way to get head lice¹. Due to the nature of camp activities and cabin life, the risk of head-to-head contact with campers is high. Campers may have head-to-head contact when doing team building activities, in the cabins and many other camp activities.

1. https://www.cdc.gov/parasites/lice/head/gen_info/faqs.html

Bites, Strings & Itching

When you are outside as much as we are, bites, stings, and the itching that is associated can happen. We are well equipped to ensure campers can be cared for and quickly return to camp fun.

Mosquito bites are the most common in this category of bites. Campers are encouraged, and assisted as needed, to apply insect repellent throughout the day. Applying insect repellent on their own is a great skill to practice at home before camp. When mosquito bites occur, campers can receive topical treatments from their camp counselor of hydrocortisone cream. If the bite requires more care for the itching, Health Officers will assess the mosquito bite and may give an additional treatment of Benadryl Itch Cooling Spray.

Bee stings can also happen at camp. We vigilantly watch for bees and spray nests to keep them away from campers. We also make special note of campers with bee allergies so all staff working with the child can keep an extra eye out for them.

If a bee sting occurs, Health Officers are called to assess the camper and the sting. They will remove the stinger and then clean the sting with benzalkonium chloride wipes which is a gentle antiseptic. We can also apply a Sting Relief wipe to relieve pain associated with the sting. Ice is given if needed or requested. The camper will be monitored for other reactions to the sting. If there is more than a localized reaction, families will be called.

Bee stings can be more severe if there is an allergic reaction. We watch for a rash over the body, itching on the palms and feet, headache, nausea, vomiting and difficulty breathing as symptoms of an allergic reaction. If a camper shows multiple symptoms or difficulty breathing alone, families are notified and 911 is called. We will administer Benadryl if able or epinephrine if the reaction progresses more quickly.

Ticks are around camp and we occasionally find them on people. If a tick is not attached, we will simply remove it. If the tick is attached, we will gently pull on the tick until it lets go and then clean the area with antiseptic. Depending on how the removal goes, if we suspect the tick has been attached for a significant amount of time or it is a deer tick, we will notify families to follow up with a doctor.

Our 365-acre property has patches of poison ivy that we do our best to keep under control and campers away from. Should someone touch poison ivy, Health Officers will assess and assist the camper with washing the affected area with soap and water. If a poison ivy rash occurs, Health Officers can assist the camper in using

Zanfel soap to treat the itching and rash. Families will be notified if we suspect their camper has come into contact with poison ivy.

Wound Care

Playing outside, running and being kids does have an inherent risk of minor injuries. Our first aid kits are stocked with supplies to ensure we can clean and care for various wounds to get campers back into the fun as quickly as possible.

When campers get a cut, scratch or scrape, their counselor will assess the camper and the wound. If it is something that can be cared for with an antiseptic wipe, antibiotic ointment and a bandaid, they will take care of the injury on their own. Should the wound be larger than a standard bandaid size, Health Officers will be called. The wound will be assessed and cleaned before applying a larger bandaid.

Most cuts, scratches and scrapes are minor and Sherman Lake YMCA will not notify families. We will notify families of wounds under the following circumstances: if the wound is on the head, face or neck, if the circumstances that caused the wound are odd or suspect, or if the Health Officers assess that the wound needs more than a bandaid. Should the cut, scratch or scrape require additional care, the Nurse will be called in to give a better assessment for families.

Sometimes the injuries don't lead to an open wound. For bumps and bruises, we will monitor campers following an incident. If there is swelling or discoloration, campers will be given ice and asked to rest. Should the injury continue to worsen either in size, color or pain level reported by the camper, families will be notified so the child can be seen by a doctor.

Burns

Burns are also a possibility as the sun, fire building and making s'mores are each a part of our camper's week.. Campers receive a fire-building safety lesson with age-appropriate tasks for the fire-building process to prevent accidents and injuries. If campers do experience a burn, a Health Officer will be called to assess the wound.

Sunburn is the most common type of burn a camper experiences at camp. We apply sunscreen each morning after our opening ceremony at Day Camp and after WOW Time at Overnight Camp. Campers reapply sunscreen throughout the day; after time in the water and approximately every 2 hours throughout the day. The application of sunscreen is an important skill to practice at home. Staff are able to help with the application to the face, back and shoulders but need to be able to help all campers. Campers should be skilled in applying sunscreen to arms, legs, tummies and neck and know not to spray sunscreen in their or other's eyes.

The severity of the burn will determine the course of action the Health Officer takes to care for the wound. For minor first degree burns that cause pain and redness, the wound will be run under cool water, burn cream will be applied and maybe a loose wrap if needed. If the burn is more severe and a blister begins to form (second degree burn), we will call families to notify them about the injury while we care for the burn. The burn will be run under cool water, burn cream will be applied and we will offer over-the-counter pain relief with the family's permission. The burned area will be monitored closely if the camper chooses to remain at camp.

Families will be notified and 911 will be called if burns show signs of being more severe. We will also call if the burned area is widespread on the face, hands, buttocks, groin or feet.

Heat Related Illness

Staying safe and protected from heat-related illness starts at home. Dress campers in light-colored and loose clothing and have them practice drinking plenty of water, even if they are not thirsty. You can also practice putting sunscreen on and have them apply the sunscreen before coming to camp each day.

The sun is a big factor in our activity planning for the summer. We plan for drinking water to be readily available throughout the camp property, shade to be an option near activities and create opportunities for campers to get wet. Counselors and campers work together to ensure water bottles are refilled often and that regular hydration breaks are taken. When the days are hotter than normal, we will add stops into air-conditioned spaces into our schedule and may even offer cold snacks to campers to provide extra hydration in the form of a sweet treat.

Campers affected by the heat will often complain of headaches and fatigue as they become dehydrated from exertion in the hot sun. When this happens, counselors will direct the camper to drink water, take a break and find some shade to relax in. Often, these short breaks are enough to keep campers hydrated and ready to stay in the fun.

Heat cramps are often the first sign of heat illness and present as muscle cramps in the legs, arms or belly. Campers complaining of muscle pain will rest in a shaded area and be encouraged to drink water. Health Officers will do an assessment and provide electrolyte powder or drink to the camper, as needed. If the muscle pain does not subside within one hour, families will be notified to pick the child up from camp.

Heat exhaustion is the next step up in heat-related illness. This happens when heat is mixed with not drinking enough water. If a camper complains of dizziness, nausea or are sweaty but have cool and clammy skin, the counselor will call for a Health Officer. The camper will be brought inside, given an electrolyte drink and provided with cool, wet clothes for their skin. Health Officers will monitor the camper closely. If the camper doesn't show signs of improvement within 30 minutes of treatment, their family will be called and a Nurse will come to make an assessment. Heat exhaustion is a serious illness that may require treatment from a doctor and can take days to completely recover from.

Heat stroke is the most severe form of heat illness and can be life-threatening. If a camper experiences heat stroke at camp, 911 will be called immediately, as well as the camper's family. Campers are monitored closely during their time at camp so heat stroke is extremely unlikely.

Head Injuries

Most minor falls or head bumps result in campers hopping up and jumping back into what they were doing. When this happens, counselors will do a quick assessment of the camper by verbally checking in with them. The counselor will monitor the camper closely and check in again at the end of the activity to ensure they are not experiencing any pain or head injury symptoms. If the camper continues to complain of pain in the location where they were bumped or hit,, a Health Officer will be called to make a further assessment.

If a camper hits their head and it is more significant, such as from a larger fall or hitting another object with great force, a Health Officer will be called to provide an assessment. The Health Officer will use the CDC Heads Up checklist to check various signs and symptoms of the head injury. If the camper is experiencing items on the list, the Nurse will be called to check in and parents will be notified.

Medication

Below is a quick recap of how medications are turned in, followed by an in-depth description of how campers get medication throughout their days and weeks at camp. We will also review what over-the-counter medication Sherman Lake YMCA has and what doses of those medications are provided.

Medication Distribution, Overnight Campers

After medications are turned in to the health team, they are organized by cabin number and sorted into medical carts. These carts allow for each drawer and cabinet to be locked, ensuring medication can only be accessed by the health team. The medication list is organized into a Medication Administration Record (MAR) by the time of day the medication is given. Each counselor is provided with a list of

campers who take medication and the time of day medication is taken so they can remind campers to see the health team at the necessary time.

About half of medications are given out during one of the meal times. Breakfast medications are given between 8:00am and 8:45am, lunch medications are given between 12:15pm and 1:00pm and dinner medications are given between 6:00pm and 6:45pm. During these meal times, our health team is located on the back porch of the dining hall with medical carts and MARs ready to go.

Campers bring water from their meal table and see the health team when they are ready. We know some campers prefer to eat before taking medication. Once they are on the porch, the health team distributes medication to one camper per two health team members which means they are often serving one camper at a time. Campers waiting for their turn are asked to stand behind a waiting line so each camper has privacy.

When it is the camper's turn to get their medication, they will be asked a few questions (their cabin number, name and their birthday). This information will all be listed on the label for each child's baggie of medication and ensures that each camper is getting the correct medication. One Health Officer will hold the medication and the other will read out of the MAR. The medication needed is read out of the MAR along with the dosage. The Health Officer holding the medication confirms the medication and dose from the bottle's label and then measures the correct dose. Once the medication and dose are confirmed, the medication is given to the camper and the Health Officer initials it next to it in the MAR.

Once the MAR has an initial for each medication, the Health Officer will shut down the distribution space, checking each drawer to ensure the medications in each drawer belong there. Once all drawers have been reset for the next round of medication distribution, they are locked. The MAR is placed in the cabinet and that is locked as well.

If medications are taken at any time other than meals, they are distributed in the location of the camper at the time required. The most common times are before bedtime and in the afternoon between 2:00 and 3:30pm. Health Officers will place the needed bags of medications into a medication case that locks. When it is time to distribute the medication, the Health Officers will find the campers, perform all of the same systems listed above, and note them in the MAR. Medications are returned to the drawers promptly so they are ready for the next distribution.

Medication Distribution, Day Campers

Day Camp medications are distributed in whatever location the camper is at when the medication is needed. Day Campers don't eat lunch in one space and often medications are needed between 2:00-3:30pm. Health Officers carry medications (in a locked case) and Medication Administration Records (MAR) with them throughout the day. When it is time to distribute the medication, Health Officers will find the camper and a discreet place to give the medication. The Health Officer will ask for the camper's name and birthday. This information will all be listed on the label for the baggie of medication for each child and ensures that each camper is getting the correct medication. One Health Officer will hold the medication and the other will read out of the MAR. The Health Officer holding the medication will confirm the medication and dose from the bottle's label and measure out the correct dose. Once the medication and dose are confirmed from the MAR, the medication is given to the camper and the Health Officer will initial next to it in the MAR.

Over the Counter Medication Provided by Sherman Lake YMCA Camp

Sherman Lake YMCA stocks over-the-counter medications (listed below) for minor aches, pains, and other issues that can arise at camp. Medications are given in the doses approved by our licensed physician, based on age/weight. If your camper takes a higher dose of any of these medications, Sherman Lake YMCA requires an authorization from a caregiver. Each of these over-the-counter medications is listed on the Health Form. As you fill out the form, you may deny permission to any or all of the medications listed below. If a form indicates that we can not administer an over-the-counter medication, a member of the health team will call the caregiver to seek alternative solutions or request verbal approval.

Acetaminophen is the preferred medication for aches, pains and fever at Sherman Lake YMCA Outdoor Center. Acetaminophen may be given for aches, pains or elevated temperature.

Benadryl (diphenhydramine) may be given for allergic reactions or bug bites.

Ibuprofen may be given for aches, pains or fever with prior approval from the parent/guardian. Acetaminophen is the preferred medication by Sherman Lake YMCA. Ibuprofen may be given to those who request it and should be used for painful menstrual cramps and other conditions where an anti-inflammatory drug is an appropriate choice.

Tums (calcium carbonate) may be given for upset stomach or heartburn symptoms.

Dramamine (dimenhydrinate) may be given for motion sickness for children 12 and over.