

DID YOU KNOW...

**that most children in hospitals receive drugs
that have not been approved for kids?**



Nearly four out of five hospitalized children receive medications that have been tested and approved only for adults, according to a study of hundreds of thousands of patient records. This so-called "off-label" use of drugs was thought to be especially common in children, and the new research, the largest-ever U.S. pediatric study, confirms this.

"We measured the magnitude of off-label use of drugs in children," said study leader Samir S. Shah, MD, a pediatrician specializing in infectious diseases at The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia. "Given the nature of the available data, we could not evaluate safety and effectiveness of those medications, although those are important concerns. However, only a small number of drugs have been formally tested in children."

The drugs most likely to be used off-label in children were those approved for use on the central nervous system or autonomic nervous system, in addition to nutrients and gastrointestinal agents. For instance, 28 percent of the patients in the database received morphine, although the FDA has not approved it for use in children.

For more information visit archpedi.ama-assn.org/cgi/content/abstract/161/3/282