

Administering Medications Steps

DO NOT, UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES, GIVE ONE CHILD'S MEDICINE TO ANOTHER CHILD.

Always wash your hands before and after giving a medication to a child. If the child will be touching the medication, he/she should also wash his/her hands.

Administering Oral Medications

- Start with clean hands and clean equipment.
- Crushing or sprinkling a medication can only be done with written authorization by the Health Care Provider.
- If ordered or allowed, mix the dose in a small amount (i.e., 1 teaspoon) of food or drink, to be sure the child will swallow the entire dose at once.
- **NOT ALL** medications, however, can be mixed in water or juice. Contact the pharmacist for more information.

- Pills / Tablets / Capsules:
 - Pour medication into a medicine cup, lid of the bottle, paper towel, or a small paper cup.
 - Have the child wash his hands, before putting the medication into his mouth.
 - Give the child 6-8 ounces of water.
 - Never refer to medication as “candy”.
 - Observe the child swallowing the medication.

- Liquids:
 - **DO NOT OVERFILL OR UNDERFILL. IT IS IMPORTANT TO BE ACCURATE.**
 - **Note:** Medication may be prescribed in teaspoons, cc's, or ml's.
 - 1cc = 1ml
 - 5cc's or 5ml's = 1 teaspoon
 - Use a calibrated medicine spoon or cup, syringe, or dropper to measure liquid medications.
 - Check carefully for the appropriate line measurement on the spoon, cup, syringe, or dropper.
 - Never use household utensils to measure liquid medication.
 - Pour medication from the side opposite the label, so that the label remains readable.

- Medicine Spoon or Cup:
 - Read the cup on a flat surface, at eye level, for accuracy.
 - Do not try to measure something for an infant or toddler with a small medicine cup. The amount will not be accurate.
 - When using a calibrated spoon or syringe, pour or draw up medication to the appropriate line.

- **Dropper:**
 - Droppers are sometimes included as part of the medicine bottle.
 - Only use the dropper that is included with the medicine bottle.
 - Withdraw the correct dosage and squeeze the dropper, placing the medicine into the side of the child's mouth.

- **Syringe:**
 - Pour a small amount of medication into a paper cup, or any small cup.
 - Place the tip of the syringe into the liquid in the cup and pull back on the plunger.
 - Avoid air bubbles by keeping the tip below the level of the liquid. Draw up enough to equal the dosage amount.
 - Pour the remainder of the medicine back into the bottle.
 - To give the medicine, slowly squirt small amounts toward the back and side of the child's mouth. Do not squirt toward the back of the throat. (This will cause gagging.)

 - **For an Infant:** Drop medication into a nipple for them to suck. Always follow by giving the infant a bottle. **NEVER mix medications with an entire bottle.**

- **Helpful Hint:**
 - A syringe adapter is a plastic device that fits on the medicine bottle.
 - This is an easy way to draw the amount from the bottle with a syringe.
 - Hold infants in the cradle position to administer oral medication.
 - Allow toddlers to sit up in a high chair.

Make Sure the Child/Student Takes All of the Medicine!

- **Refusal or Vomiting of Medication:**
 - If the child does not take all of the medication, spits part of it out, vomits, or refuses to take part of the medication, **do not give another dose.**

 - Contact the child's parent or guardian and request further instructions from the Health Care Provider.

Administering Topical Medication

- Start with clean hands and clean equipment.
- Wear gloves when applying topical medications.
- After use, dispose of them and any contaminated dressings in a plastic-lined covered container.
- Keep topical medications separate from oral medications.
- Read instructions carefully to avoid mixing up eye and ear drops.

- **Eye Drops:**
 - Wash your hands and put on gloves.
 - Check the 6 Rights.
 - Rub medication bottle between the palms of your hand to help warm the drops.
 - Clean child's eye by wiping each eye once from the inside to the outside. Use a clean tissue for each eye.
 - Place child on his/her back, if younger than five. You may need an assistant to help.
 - If older than five, the child may be seated.
 - Ask child to look up, then gently open the eye and pull down the lower lid to make a pocket.
 - Bring the medicine toward the eye, outside of the child's field of vision.
 - Do not touch the eye or anything else with the bottle or dropper.
 - With bottle no more than one inch above the eye, drop one drop into the lower lid.
 - Close the eye. Apply pressure on the inside corner of eye for 10-20 seconds.
 - Wipe away any excess medication or tearing with clean tissue.
 - Dispose of gloves after use in a plastic-lined container, out of reach of children.
 - Wash hands.

- **Eye Ointments:** *(Follow instructions, above, for eye drops.)*
 - Apply along the inside of the lower eyelid.
 - Rotate the tube when you reach edge of the outer eye. (This will help detach the ointment from the tube.)
 - After applying, hold the eye open for a few seconds, and then have the child keep it closed for about 1 minute.
 - Wipe away any excess medication or tearing with clean tissue.
 - Dispose of gloves after use in a plastic-lined container, out of reach of children.
 - Wash hands.

- **Ear Drops:**
 - Wash your hands and put on gloves.
 - Check the 6 Rights.
 - Rub medication bottle between the palms of your hand to warm the drops.
 - Have child lie down, with affected ear facing up.
 - Child younger than three years old: Hold ear lobe and pull down and back.
 - Child older than three years old: Hold upper part of ear lobe and pull up and back.
 - A child older than five may sit in a chair and tilt head, with affected ear facing up.
 - Clean ear with cotton and discard.

Note: If you see blood or pus, do not administer the drops. Notify the CCHC/SN and the child's parent/guardian.

- Drop medication on the side of ear canal.
- Do not touch the dropper to the ear.
- Have child stay on his/her side for several minutes.
- Dispose of gloves after use in a plastic-lined container, out of reach of children.
- Wash hands.

NEVER INSERT Q-TIPS OR COTTON BALLS INTO THE EAR CANAL!

- **Skin Creams/ Ointments:**

- A cream is a type of medication for topical use (on the skin) that is 50% oil (usually lanolin or petrolatum) and 50% water.
- An ointment is a type of medication for topical use (on the skin) that usually contains 80% oil (usually lanolin or petrolatum) and 20% water.
- The more oil in a topical medication, the “greasier” and “stickier” the product is.
 - Ointment will stay on the skin longer, and may be prescribed if slower absorption is desired.
- Creams are easier to “spread”, and are often prescribed for larger areas.
- Creams absorb into the skin quickly.

- **When Applying Skin Creams and Ointments:**

- Always use *Standard Precautions*.
- Wash your hands and put on gloves.
- Check the 6 Rights.
- Remove bandage, if applicable.
- Apply cream or ointment to affected area with applicator (or gloved finger).
 - Use a small amount to cover the area and rub onto the skin.
- If Instructions State to Cover the Affected Area:
 - If the affected area is small, use a band-aid.
 - ✓ Place medication on the gauze pad of the band-aid, then cover the area with the band-aid.
 - If the affected area is larger, use gauze pads for dressing.
 - ✓ Place the medicine on the dressing (the gauze pad).
 - ✓ Then place the dressing on the affected area.
 - ✓ Cover the dressing with a bandage, such as gauze wrap or an elastic bandage, and tape in place.
- Dispose of gloves after use in a plastic-lined container, out of reach of children.
- Wash hands.
- Document.

- **Notes:**

- **Carefully follow label instructions when applying any type of topical medication.**
- **Contact a pharmacist, or your Child Care Health Consultant (CCHC)/School Nurse, if you have any questions about application instructions.**