

GOOD BEGINNINGS NEVER END

N.C. Child Care Health & Safety Resource Center • 1-800-246-6731

December 1999

Key Points

- Medications should only be given in the child care setting when it is absolutely necessary.
- Specific instructions from the child's parent, a physician, or authorized health professional are required before administering medication.
- All medications should be stored and labeled properly.
- The *Five Rights* must always be followed when giving medications to a child: *Right* child, *right* medicine, *right* dose, *right* route, and *right* time.
- Good handwashing habits can help decrease bacteria and germs and keep children healthy. Healthy children do not need to take medications!

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Medication Administration

During the winter months, as many as 50% of children in childcare may be taking some type of prescription or over-the-counter medication. You may feel like a hospital nurse when you are required to coordinate the administration of one or more medications daily for several children in your family child care home. It is an important responsibility!

What can providers, health professionals, and families do to make sure medications are delivered safely to a child? All medications for children enrolled in child care must have written permission and specific instructions for administering the medication, including:

- The child's name
- The name of the medication and how and when it is to be given
- The parent's signature of consent

Follow these recommendations for safe medication administration:

- Remind parents to ask about options for medications that can be given once or twice daily.
- Ask parents to request separate medicine bottles from the pharmacist for home and child care.
- Inform parents that medications may not be shared with other children, including siblings.
- Store medications in separate locked storage as required by the sanitation regulations.



Michele Miller practices the *Five Rights* of medication administration in her family child care home.

- Keep a medication record in your child care facility.
- Record when you give medications in a log.
- Save written documentation of medication administered on file for at least six months.

(For examples of a medication form and log, call us at 1-800-246-6731.)

Administering medications to children in your care is just one of your many responsibilities. Knowing how to properly administer medicines, communicating with parents and health care providers, and following appropriate policies and procedures assures that the child receives medications safely.

*Best wishes for a safe and healthy child care year
from all of us at the North Carolina Child Care
Health and Safety Resource Center!*

Lisa La Rinda



Training Opportunities

January 8

Be Active Kids
Elizabeth City
Gwen Stephens
252-338-3954

January 8

Family Day Care
Environmental
Rating Scale
Whiteville
910-642-8189

January 11, 18, 25

Reframing Discipline:
Doing the Groundwork
from Stopping Misbehavior
to Teaching Skills
Lillington
910-893-7597

January 18

Getting bones & muscles fit
for the new millennium
Gaston Co.

January 20

Science for the young child
Whiteville
910-642-8189

January 20

Developing Theme Boxes
Rocky Mount
Sharonetta Thompson
252-985-4300

January 26

Mid Winter Conference
Gaston Co.
704-867-0333



The ABC's of Safe and Healthy Child Care...

Adverse Reactions

Child care providers give the best possible care for all children when they know about medicine side effects and allergic reactions.

Many adverse reactions or **side effects** to medications are well known and expected. They are usually mild and often will decrease or stop after several doses. Some of the more common drug side effects are drowsiness, headache, stomach ache, fatigue, muscle aches, or dizziness. Drugs may cause several side effects and children may react differently to the same drug. You should always inform parents of any observed side effects.

Allergic reactions to medications are less common but can be more serious. Signs of an allergic reaction include rash, itching, swelling, dizziness, or breathing difficulties. If a child has an allergic reaction, the doctor should be notified immediately. As in any emergency situation, if a child is having breathing difficulties, call 911 and get emergency medical help immediately!

Over-The-Counter Medications

Over-the-counter medications are non-prescription products such as cough and cold preparations and acetaminophen, meant to relieve some symptoms of common illnesses, not cure them. If a child needs over-the-counter medicine, you must have:

- Written instructions from the parent or physician
- Written permission from the child's parent
- Child's name written on the bottle



If the dosage conflicts with the instructions on the bottle, a parent can write a statement that documents the date the physician was contacted with specific instructions about the dosage from the physician. If a dosage is in question, you can request signed instructions from the physician. Remember: It is always your option to refuse to administer a medication.

Blanket Permission



According to the North Carolina Administrative Code Section .0803: "A written statement from a parent may give blanket permission for

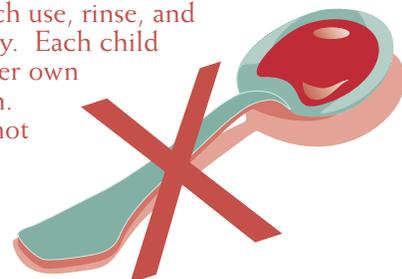
- Up to six months to authorize administration of medication for asthma and allergic reactions.
- Up to one year to authorize administration of sunscreen and over-the-counter diapering creams.

The written statement should describe the specific conditions under which these medications and creams are to administered and detailed instructions on how they are to be administered."

For a sample form for blanket permission, call 1-800-246-6731.

How Much Is A Teaspoon?

Practice measuring an amount of liquid in a teaspoon (eating utensil), a measuring teaspoon, a medicine dropper, and a medicine spoon. The actual amount may differ significantly! Always use a medicine dropper, syringe, or a medicine spoon to measure the correct dosage for liquid medications. Choose one that allows the child to swallow all the medicine with no medicine left in the dropper/spoon. Make sure the markings are clearly visible. Clean the dropper/spoon with warm soapy water after each use, rinse, and allow to air dry. Each child should have her own dropper/spoon. They should not be shared.



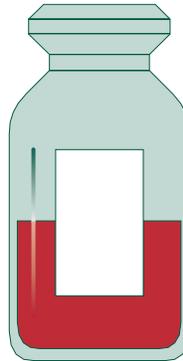
Test Your Knowledge

Pamela has a child in her care that is taking Amoxicillin. She is familiar with this medication and its side effects. She always follows the Five Rights of medication administration for children in her care. Below is the Checklist that she uses before administering medications:

1. Check for the permission slip signed by the parent.
2. Take the medication out of the locked storage area.
3. Double check the amount of the dosage.
4. Give the exact dosage to the child.
5. Return any remaining medication to the locked storage area.
6. Write down the time and the dosage given.
7. Sign the medication log.

At what step(s) should Pamela wash her hands?

Call us at 1-800-246-6731 with your answer and receive a free gift!



References for December Articles

Healthy Child Care April-May, 1998.

Healthy Child Care April-May, 1999.

Healthy Child Care June-July, 1999.

Healthy Child Care America, Summer 1999, American Academy of Pediatrics.

ABC's of Safe and Healthy Child Care,
by Cynthia Hale and Jacquelyn Polder, CDC, 1999.

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FOR MORE INFORMATION

or if you would like to send suggestions or comments

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www.healthychildcarenc.org

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